

## **Liz Claiborne Inc. Topline Findings Teen Relationship Abuse Survey (Conducted March 2006)**

**Objectives & Methodology:** Liz Claiborne Inc. commissioned TRU to field quantitative research to gauge the degree to which teens have been involved in abusive and/or controlling relationships and to understand youth perceptions regarding what is and is not acceptable behavior in a relationship. The questionnaire fielded online March 6-14, 2006 among a representative sample of 1,004 U.S. teens ages 13 to 18. The margin of error is plus or minus four percentage points (at the 95% confidence level).

### **Highlights**

Research shows deep and troubling evidence that significant numbers of today's teens are not only victims of dating abuse but are accepting it as normal.

More alarmingly, as teens get older and enter into serious relationships, a still greater number are exhibiting and accepting controlling, abusive, and even violent behaviors—often by a two-to-one margin over younger teens who have less dating experience.

Many young people face tremendous pressure to have a boyfriend, girlfriend, keep a relationship, and to have sex.

- > Nearly two-thirds (61%) of 13- to- 18-year-olds have been in a relationship, dated someone, or “hooked up.”
  - » Even more—three-fourths (75%) of 16-18s—have had a relationship, dated, or “hooked up” with someone.
    - Half of these older teens (49%) have been seriously involved with a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- > One in four teens (24%) reported feeling pressure to date; a shocking 14% said they would do almost anything to keep a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- > One in four (25%) also said sex is expected of people their age who are in a relationship.
  - » Fully one-third of 16-18s (33%)—and 31% of teens who have been in a serious relationship—reported that sex is expected.

**For many teens who have had boyfriends or girlfriends, dating pressures aren't simple adolescent angst; they're power and control issues that commonly underpin abusive relationships.**

- > Nearly two-thirds of these teens (64%) were with someone who “acted really jealous and asked where they were all the time.”
- > Almost half of teens who have been in a relationship (47%)—and 55% of those who describe theirs as serious—have done something that compromised their own values in order to please their partner.
- > One in five teens who have been in relationship (21%) have been with a partner who tried to prevent them from seeing family or friends.
  - » More 16-18s than 13-15s (24% and 15%, respectively) have endured this type of controlling behavior.

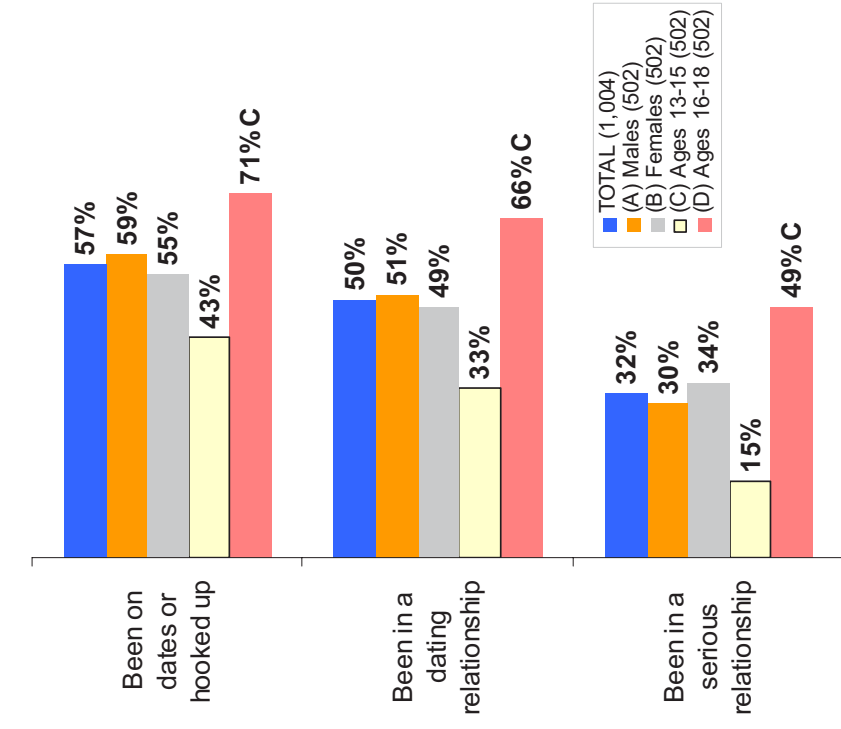
**Troubling numbers of teens in relationships are further exposed to verbal, emotional, and even physical threats.**

- > Three out of five (61%) said that they've had a boyfriend or girlfriend who made them feel bad or embarrassed about themselves.

**A startling 30% reported worrying about their personal physical safety in a relationship.**

- > A concerning 15% of those who have been in a relationship—and 20% of those who have been in a serious relationship—have been hit, slapped, or pushed by a boyfriend or girlfriend.

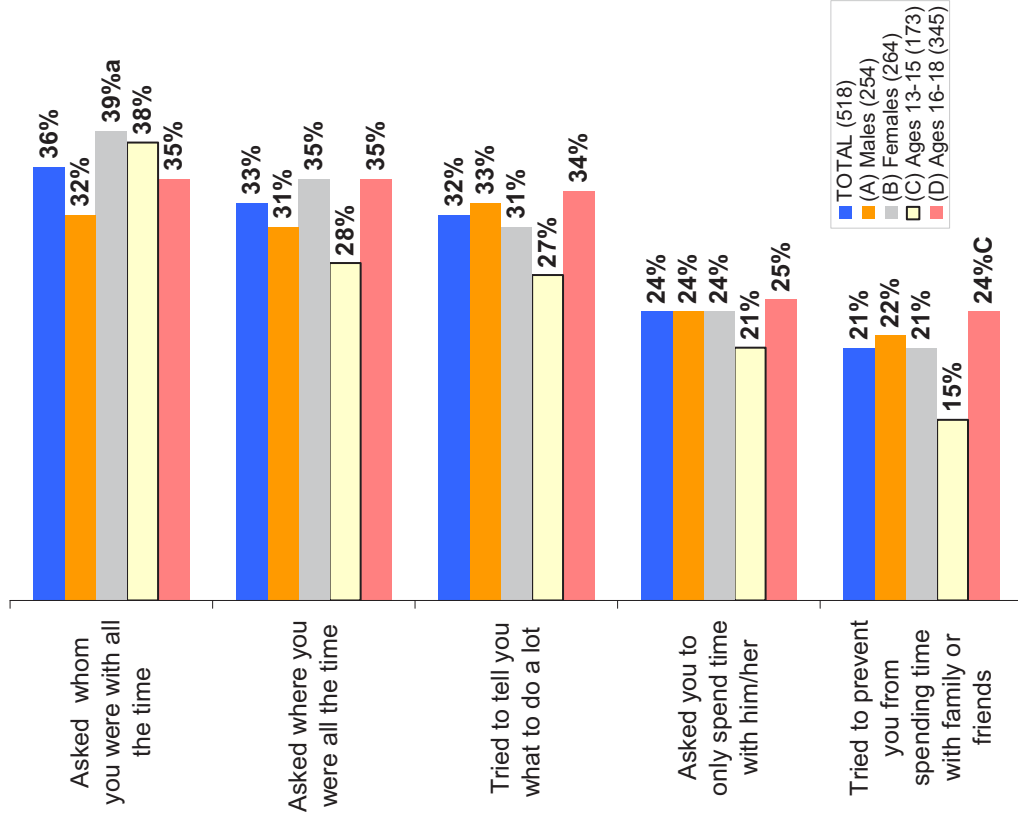
**Relationships are common among teens—a strong majority (61%) have dated, hooked up, or been in a relationship**



**Question 3:** Have you ever...? [Note: Many teens reported that they've been in more than one of the three types of relationships asked about.]

- > Half of teens (50%) reported they've been in a dating relationship and nearly a third (32%) said they've been in a serious relationship.
- > *Teens grow up fast:* more than three times as many 16- to 18-year-olds as younger teens (49% vs. 15%) reported they've been seriously involved.
  - » Three-fourths (75%) of 16-18s have been in a serious relationship, dated, or hooked up [not charted].
- > Moreover, one out of four teens (24%) said they feel pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend [not charted].
  - » Some 14% said they would do almost anything to keep their partner.

**Power and control actions and attitudes are pervasive in teen relationships—many young people have dealt with a boyfriend or girlfriend who tried to control their whereabouts**

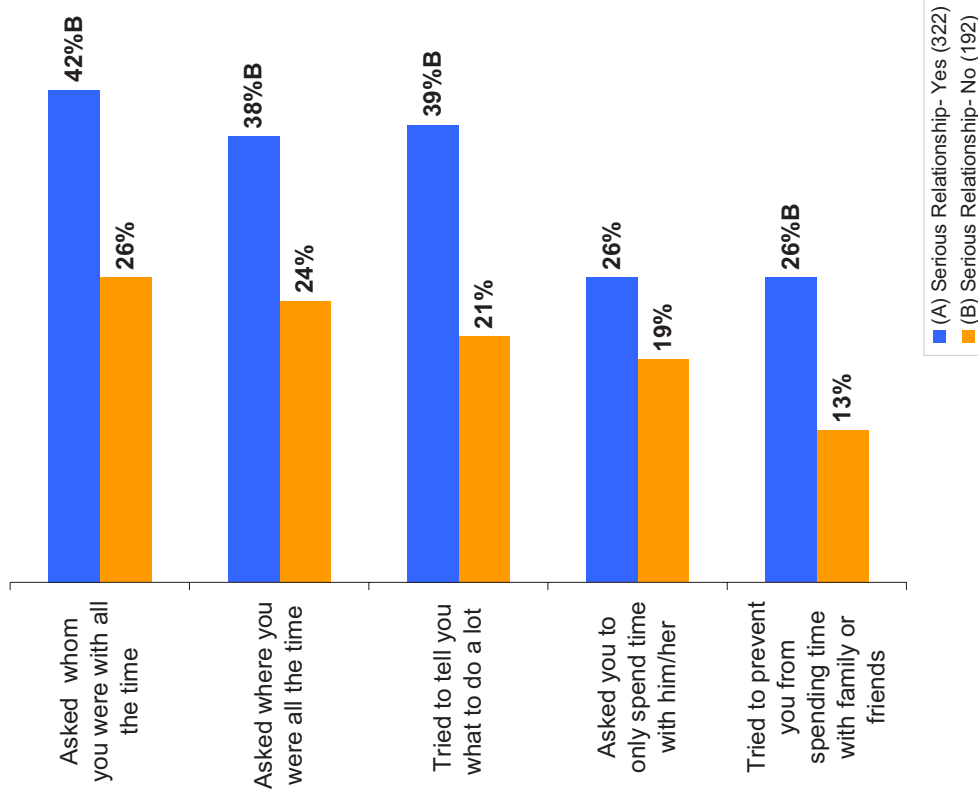


**Question 8:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship...] Have you ever been in a relationship (with a boyfriend/girlfriend) where someone...?

- > One-third or more of teens who have been in a relationship have been with a partner who frequently asked where they were and whom they were with.
  - » Significantly more girls (39%) than guys (32%) have been asked to explain time spent with others.
- > Nearly one-third of these teens (32%) have been with someone who often told them what to do.
- > One-fourth (24%) reported that their boyfriend or girlfriend tried to convince them to only spend time together.
- > A concerning 21% said they've been in a relationship with a partner who wanted to keep them from seeing family or friends.
  - » More 16-18s, especially, have experienced this form of controlling behavior (24% vs. 15% for 13-15s).

Serious vs. non-serious relationships charted on next page...

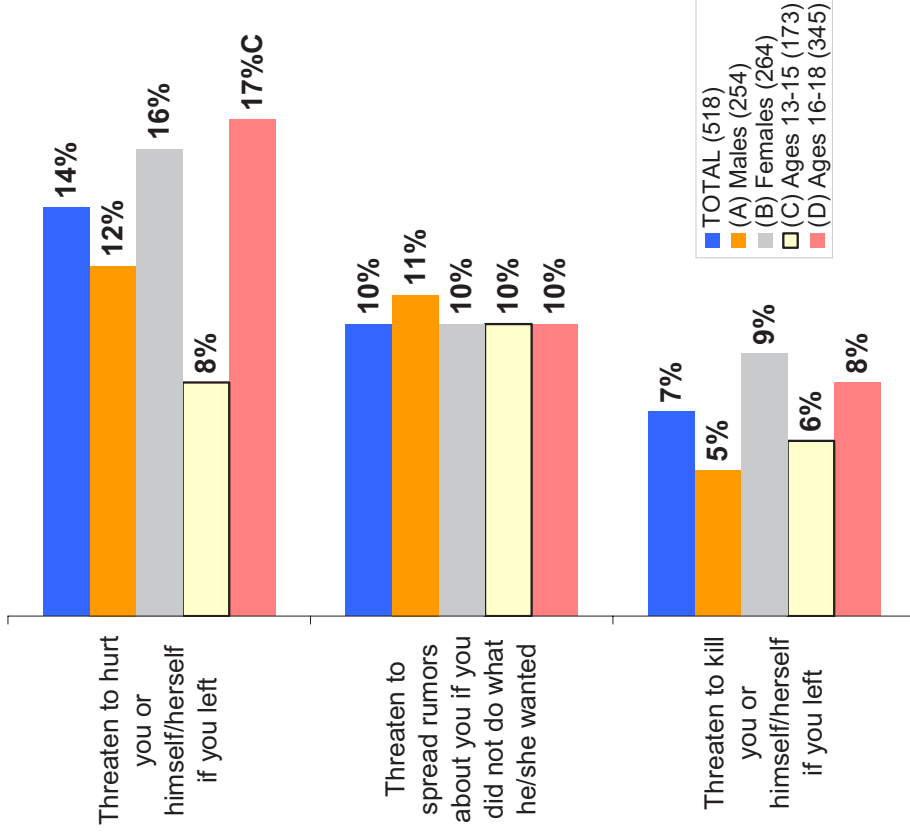
**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**



- > More teens who have been in a serious relationship reported that they've had to contend with a boyfriend or girlfriend trying to monitor or control their whereabouts.
  - » More who have been in a serious relationship said they've been asked whom they were with (42% vs. 26%) and where they were (38% vs. 24%) "all the time."
  - » More young people who have been in a serious relationship have also often been told what to do by their partner (39% vs. 21%).
  - » Twice as many who have been in a serious relationship (26% vs. 13%) said a partner has tried to prevent them from seeing friends or family.

**Question 8:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship...] Have you ever been in a relationship (with a boyfriend/girlfriend) where someone...?

**A troubling 19% of teens in a relationship have been threatened by their partner**

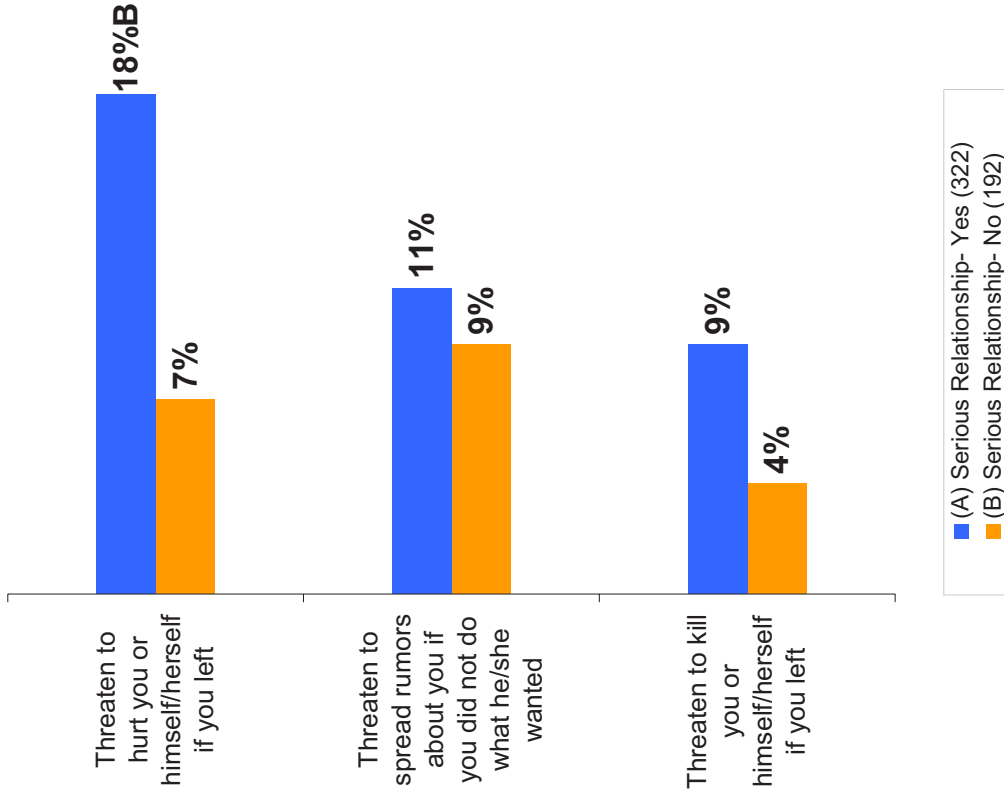


- > A significant number of teens (14%) said they have been threatened with physical harm—either to them or self-inflicted by their partner—to avoid a breakup.
  - » More older (17%) than younger teens (8%) reported receiving such threats.
- > One out of 10 of these teens has been threatened with the spread of rumors by their partner as a means of control.
- > A shocking 7% said someone in a relationship has either threatened to kill them or commit suicide in an attempt to stay together.

Serious vs. non-serious relationships charted on next page...

**Question 9:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship...] Have you ever had someone in a relationship...?

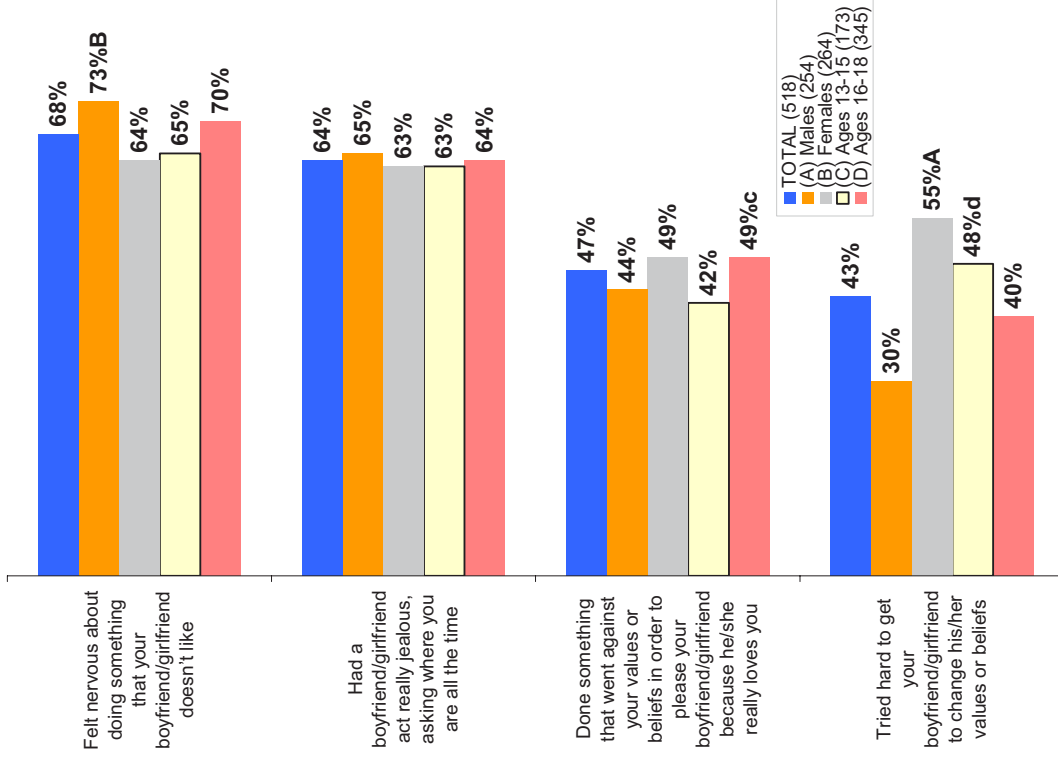
**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**



**Question 9:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship...] Have you ever had someone in a relationship...?

> Physical violence is more prevalent among teens who have been involved in serious relationships. More of these teens said they've been confronted by a boyfriend or girlfriend who threatened to hurt them (or hurt themselves) to avoid a break up (18% vs. 7%).

**An alarming 47% of teens have done something that conflicts with their personal values or beliefs to please their boyfriend or girlfriend**

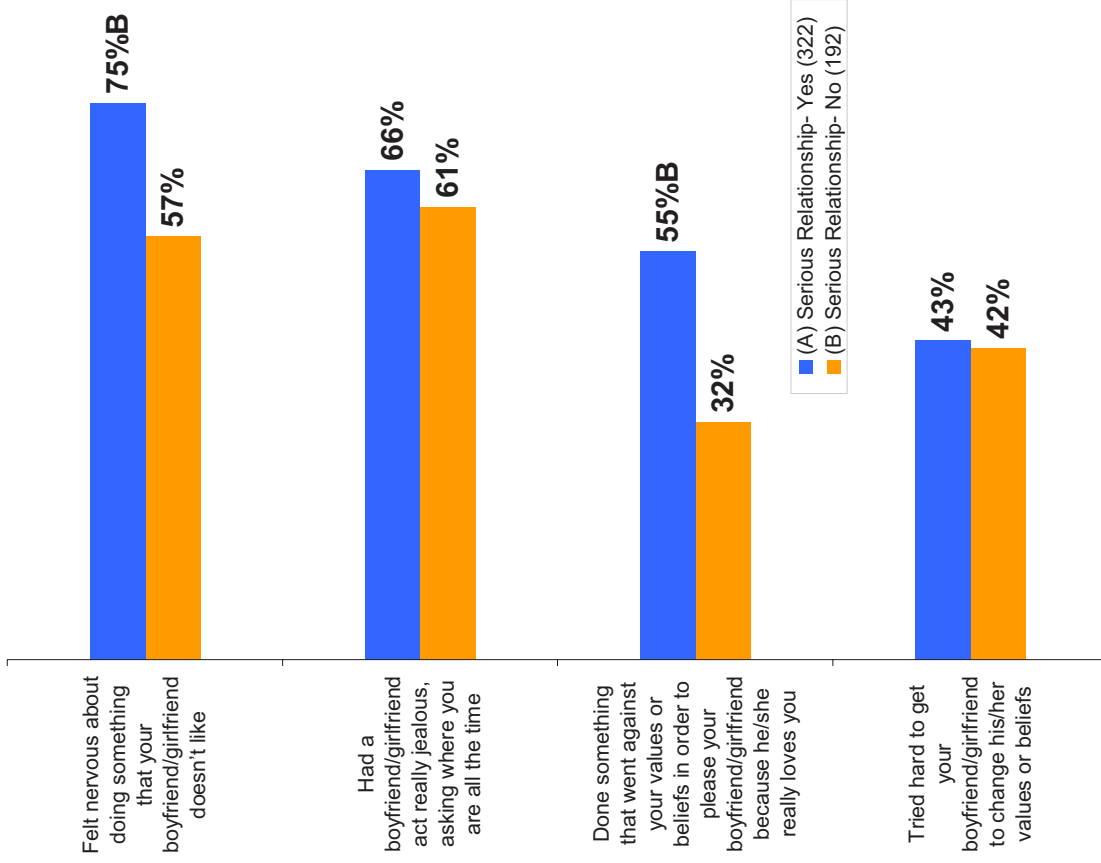


**Question 7:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship...] In your relationship(s), how often have you ...?

- > Controlling issues become more serious as teens get older: more older than younger teens fall into situations where their own beliefs are compromised.
  - » More 16-18s (49%) than 13-15s (42%) reported having behaved in a way that contradicted their values in order to please a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- > Almost two-thirds (64%) said they've had a boyfriend or girlfriend act really jealous and ask where there were all the time.

Serious vs. non-serious relationships charted on next page...

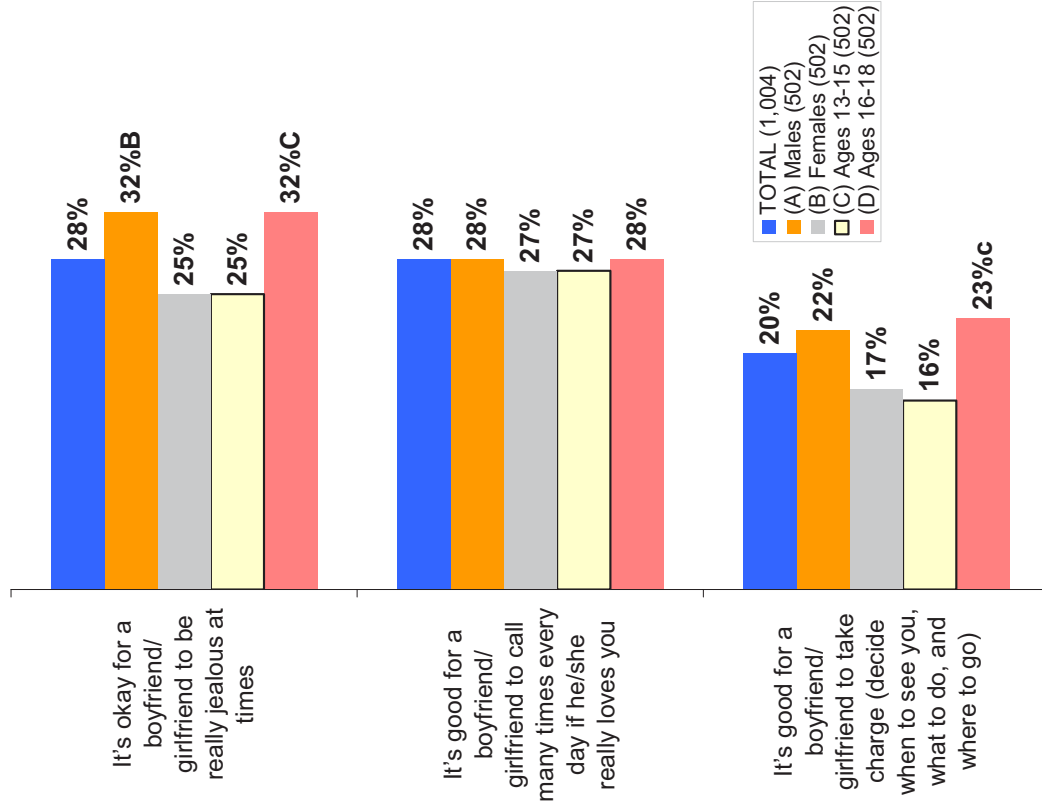
**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**



- > A significantly greater number of teens who have been in a serious relationship reported that they've felt nervous about doing something that their boyfriend or girlfriend wouldn't like (75% vs. 57%).
- > More teens with a serious relationship history (55%) than those without (32%) abandoned their values at some point to please the one they're dating.

**Question 7:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship...] In your relationship(s), how often have you ...?

**Jealousy is accepted, even expected, by many teens—a disturbing 28% said that it's okay for the person they're dating to act "really jealous"**

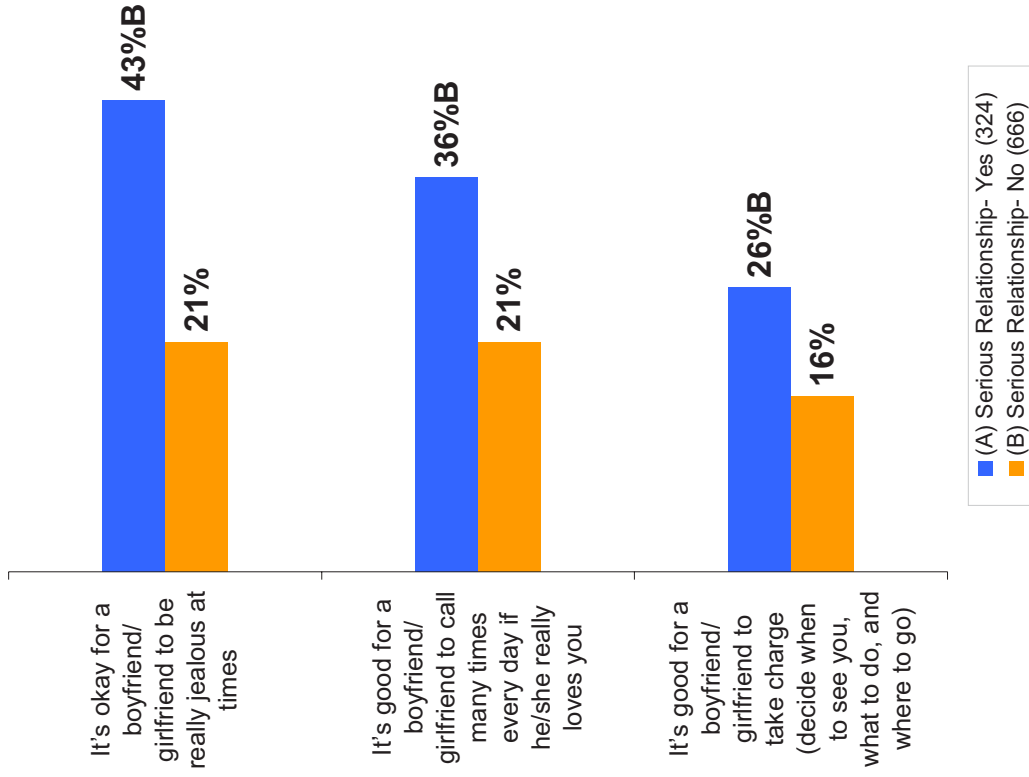


- > More guys (32%) than girls (25%) reported that it's okay for a significant other to be really jealous at times during a relationship.
- > More older than younger teens (32% vs. 25%) tolerate jealous behavior.
- > More than one in four teens said that frequent phone calls from boyfriends or girlfriends during the day are good (28%).
- > One out of five reported it's good for a partner to take charge—deciding when to see each other, what to do, and where to go.

Serious vs. non-serious relationships charted on next page...

**Question 6:** How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

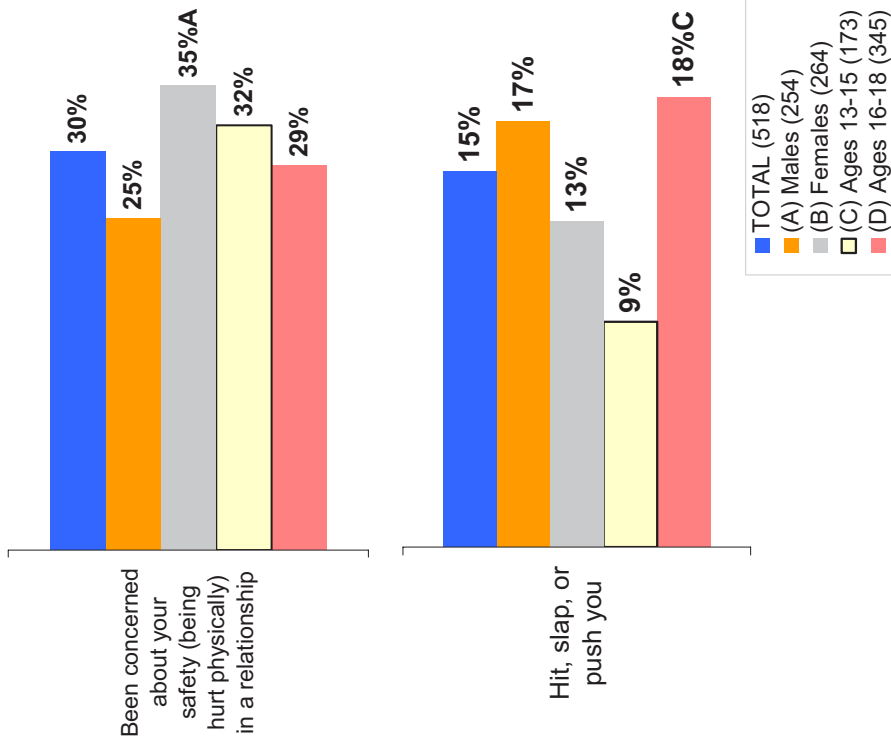
**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**



**Question 6:** How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

- > Significantly higher proportions of teens who have been in a serious relationship reported that it's "good" or "okay" for a boyfriend or girlfriend to behave in a jealous or controlling manner.
  - » More who have been in a serious relationship said it's permissible for a partner to be "really jealous at times" (43% vs. 21%).
  - » More young people who have been seriously involved said it's good for a significant other to take charge and decide when to see them, where to go, what to do, etc. (26% vs. 16%).

**Of teens that have been in a relationship, a troublesome 30% (including more girls than guys) said they've been concerned for their physical safety**



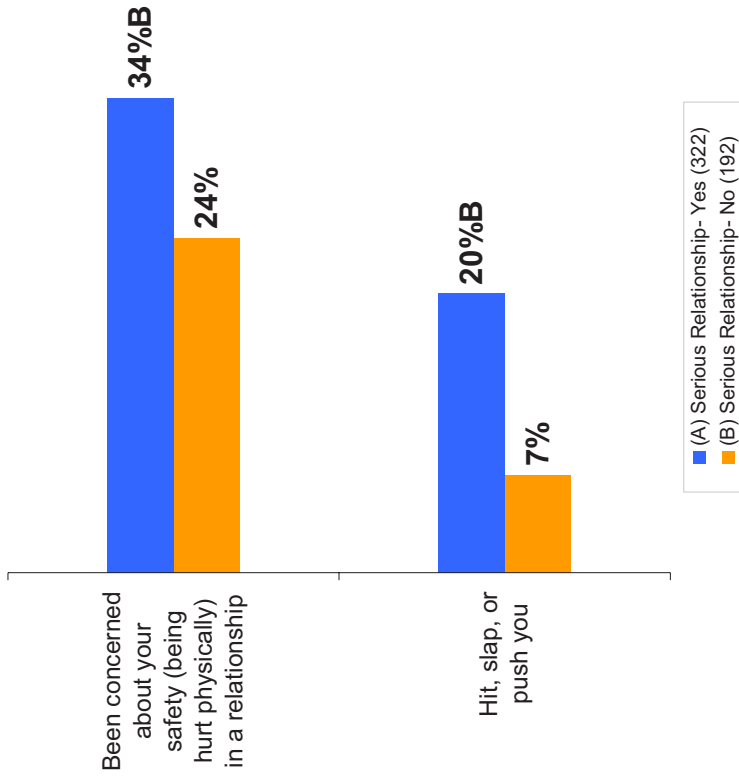
- > Among teens who have been in a relationship, 15% said they've had a partner hit, slap, or push them.
- > Twice as many (30%) have worried about being hurt physically by a relationship partner.
  - » Of concern, 4% of teens agreed that it's okay for someone to hit their partner if they really did something wrong or embarrassing [not charted].
  - » More Hispanic teens (13%) reported that hitting a partner was permissible.

Serious vs. non-serious relationships charted on next page...

**Question 7:** In your relationship(s), how often have you...?

**Question 9:** Have you ever had someone in a relationship...?

### Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship



- > Startlingly, more teens who have been in a serious relationship have feared for their personal physical safety and have suffered physical violence at the hands of a partner.
  - » More who have been in a serious relationship reported that they've been concerned about being hurt physically by a boyfriend or girlfriend (34% vs. 24%).
  - » One of out five of these teens said they have actually been hit, slapped, or pushed by a partner.

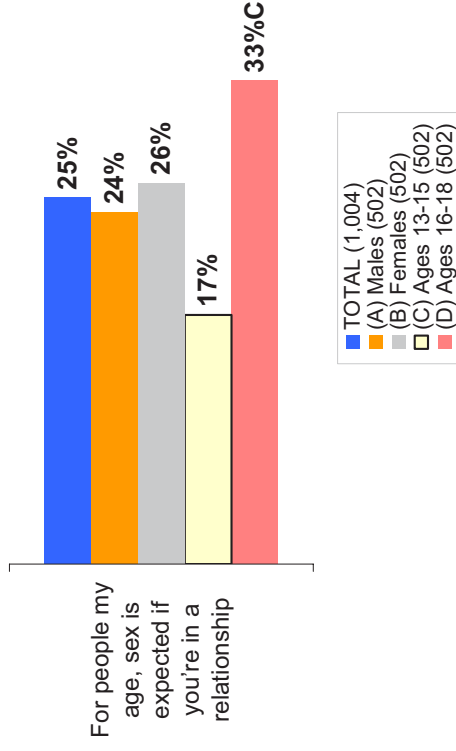
**Question 7:** In your relationship(s), how often have you...?

**Question 9:** Have you ever had someone in a relationship...?

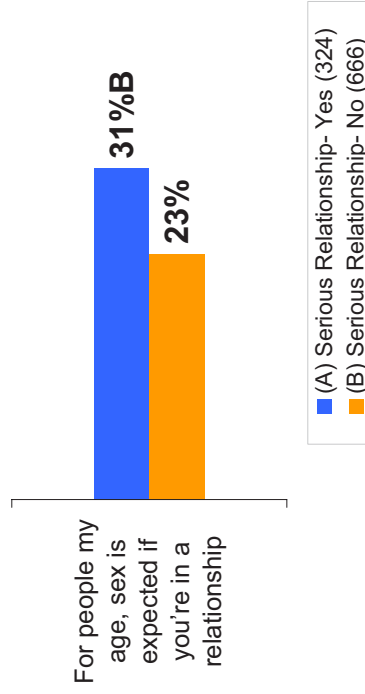
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- > Almost one-third of girls who have been in a relationship (29%) said they've been pressured to have sex or to engage in sexual acts when they didn't want to do so.
  - » Nearly one out of four (23%) reported they've gone further sexually in a relationship than they wanted.
  - » Overall, more teens who have been in a serious relationship said that they've gone further sexually than they wanted (16% vs. 9%).
- > Teens—and primarily girls—reported many concerns about the fate of their relationships if they didn't agree to engage in sexual activity.
  - » Nearly half (47%) have worried that their partner would break up with them.
  - » Fully 37% feared that their boyfriend/girlfriend would think less of them.
- > Many of these teens also reported concerns about what other people would think.
  - » Almost one-third (31%) worried that others might gossip or spread rumors about them.
  - » Additionally, 17% said friends or peers might think less of them.
- > One-fourth (24%) reported that their partner might retaliate by picking a verbal fight, and 12% even worried about the possibility of being physically harmed.

**One out of four teens (25%)—and an even greater percentage of older teens (33%) and teens who have been in a serious relationship (31%)—reported that sex is expected for people their age**

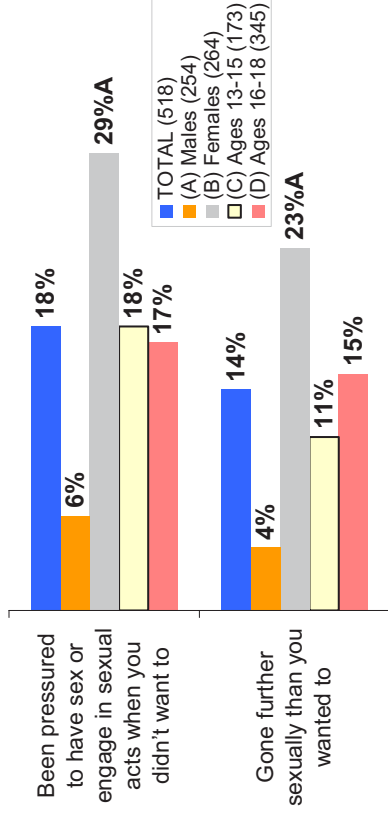


**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**

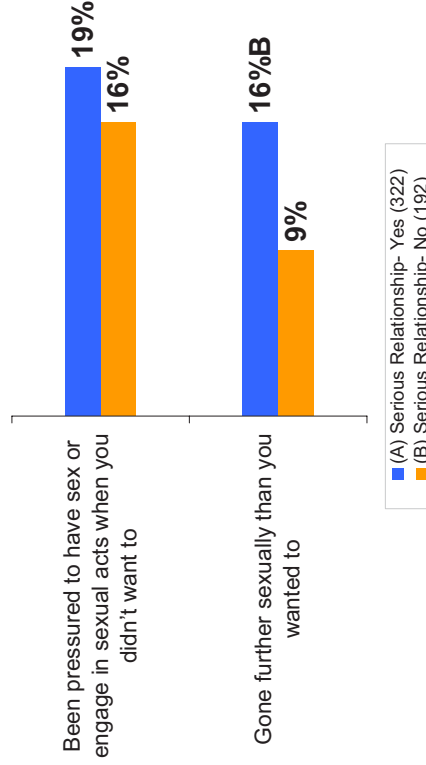


**Question 6:** How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

**Nearly one-third of teen girls (29%) said they've been pressured to engage in sexual activity when they didn't want to do so; 23% have gone further sexually than they wanted**

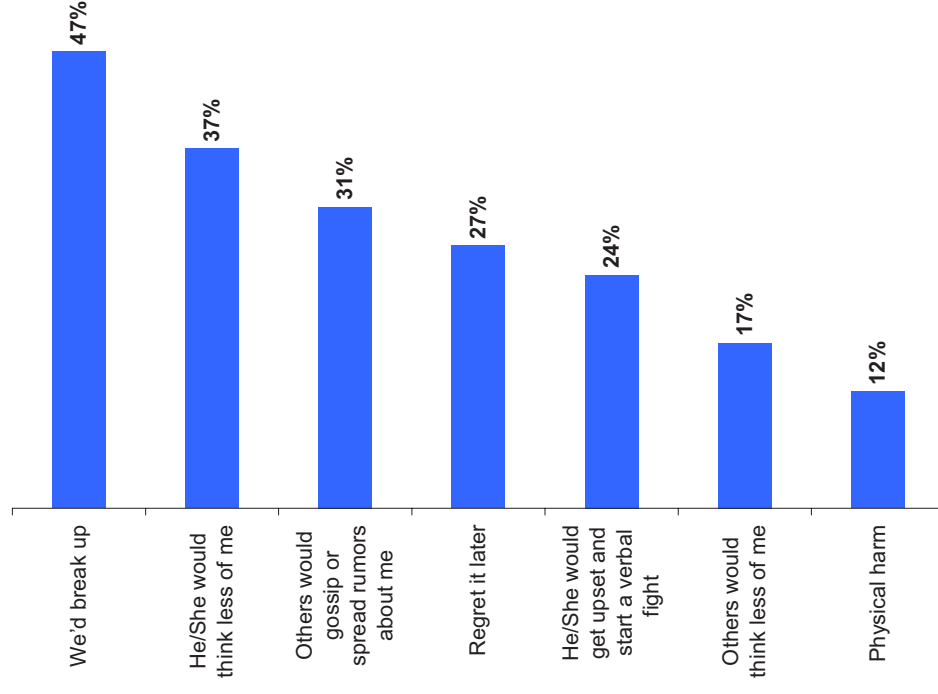


**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**



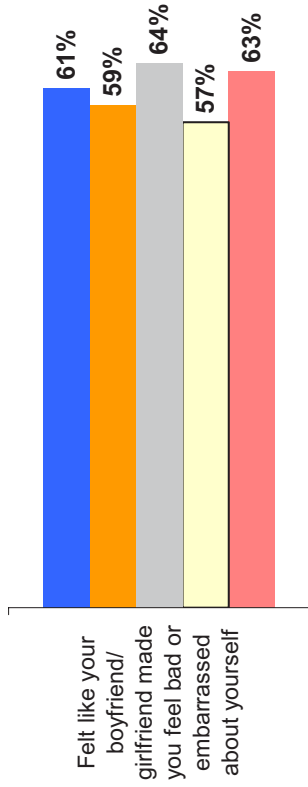
**Question 10:** [If been in a dating or serious relationship... ] Have you ever...?

**Pressured teens worry about breakups, humiliation, verbal, and even physical fights if they don't consent to engage in sexual activity**

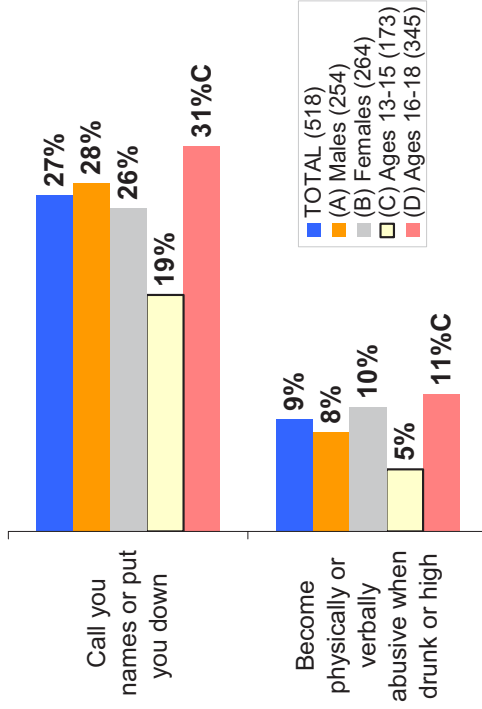


**Question 11:** What were you afraid would happen if you didn't give into the pressure to engage in sexual acts? Please mark all that apply.

**The strong majority of teens who have been in a relationship have endured emotional abuse from their partner**



**Question 7:** In your relationship(s), how often have you ever...?

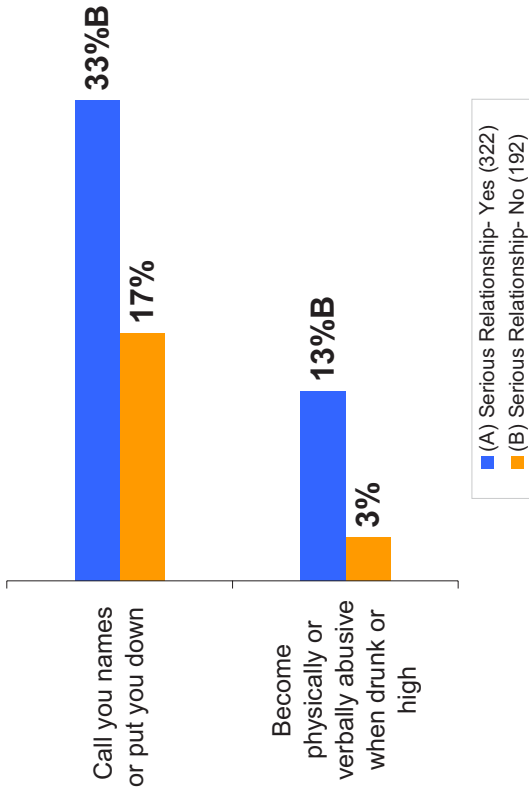


**Question 9:** Have you ever had someone in a relationship...?

- > Of teens who have been in a relationship, a strong majority (61%) reported that a partner has made them feel bad or embarrassed about themselves.
  - >> Importantly, 8% reported that they endure such abuse “often.”
- > More than one-fourth of teens (27%) who have been in a relationship said they’ve had a partner call them names or put them down.
- > Roughly one in ten (9%) have been verbally or physically abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend who was drunk or high.

Serious vs. non-serious relationships charted on next page...

**Serious vs. Non-Serious Relationship**



- > More teens who have been in a serious relationship reported that they've been called names or put down by a partner (33% vs. 17%).
- > A concerning 13% of young people that have been seriously involved endured a boyfriend or girlfriend that has become physically or verbally abusive while drunk or high.

**Question 9:** Have you ever had someone in a relationship...?