

# TOP 10 AMERICAN TEEN ISSUES

## 1. Abusive/ Neglected Relationships

- **Types of Abuse:** Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Verbal Abuse.
- Out of every 3 teenagers, at least one knows someone of the same age who has been slapped, punched, kicked or physically hurt by their loved one.
- It's shocking, but almost 80% of girls in intimate relationships who have been physically abused, continue to be in a relationship with the abusive partner.
- Every 1 in 4 teenage girls report to have suffered from verbal abuse in their relationships.
- 33% of teens would choose to be silent if they happened to be in an abusive relationship. 73% of teenagers say that if they happened to be involved in an abusive relationship, they would ask for a friend's help.
- 1 in 4 girls, who have been in a relationship, state that they were pressurized to perform oral sex or indulge in intercourse with their boyfriend.
- According to the Teen Dating Abuse Survey (2007) conducted by Liz Claiborne Inc. and Teenage Research Unlimited:
  - 71% of teenagers state that their boyfriends/girlfriends spread rumors about them through cell phones and social networking sites.
  - 68% of the teenagers say that their boyfriends/girlfriends post and share embarrassing pictures/videos through social networking sites and cell phones.

## 2. Premarital Sexual Relationships

- In 2009, 46% of high school students had sexual intercourse and 13.8% had four or more sex partners during their life.
- Prior to the sexual activity, 21.6% drank alcohol or used drugs.
- In 2009, 34% of sexually active high school students did not use a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse.
- In 2006, an estimated 5,259 young people (ages 13-24) were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.
- Each year, approximately 19 million new STD infections occur, and almost half of them are among youth ages 15-24.
- Most teens (6 in 10) and adults (3 in 4) believe that teen boys often receive the message that they are "expected" to have sex.
- 75% of girls and over 50% of boys stated that girls who have sex do so because their boyfriends want them to.

### 3. Depression/ Teen Suicide

- Suicide was the 11th leading cause of death in the United States.
- It was the 8th leading cause of death for males, and 19th leading cause of death for females. The total number of suicide deaths was 30,622. Suicides outnumbered homicides (20,308) by 3 to 2. There were twice as many deaths due to suicide than deaths due to HIV/AIDS (14,175) 73%.
- **Teen suicide** was the 3rd leading cause of death among young adults and adolescents 15 to 24 years of age, following unintentional injuries and homicide. The rate was 10 in every 100,000.
- Among young people 20 to 24 years of age, the youth suicide rate was 12 in every 100,000 or 2,360 deaths among 19,711,423 people in this age group. The gender ratio for this age group was 7:1 (males: females).
- Girls attempt suicide more than boys 3:1; Men succeed in suicide more than women 4:1

### 4. Drugs and Alcohol

- Alcohol consumption combined with conditions such as depression and stress contribute to suicide, the third leading cause of death among people between the ages of 14 and 25.
- 37% of eighth grade females who drank heavily reported attempting suicide, compared to the 11% who did not drink.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 20. The rate of fatal crashes involving drivers 16 to 20 years old, under the influence of alcohol, is more than twice the rate of drivers 21 and older under the influence.
- Research suggests that alcohol use by the offender, the victim or both, increase the likelihood of sexual assault by a male acquaintance; Approximately 10% of female high school students reported having been raped by someone under the influence of drugs and or Alcohol.
- In the last thirty days 50% of teenagers were reported to consume Alcohol with 32% being drunk at least once.

### 5. Self Esteem/ Image

- Television and movies often promote underweight women as being the most attractive.
- The average model today is 25% thinner than the average American woman.
- Almost 54 percent of American girls and women aged 12 to 23 years old are unhappy with their bodies
- One-third of high school students thought they were overweight when they were not
- Roughly 75 percent of girls as young as 9 years old have dieted from 2 to 5 times in a given year.
- 5 to 10 million females' young and old have battled eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia. It is estimated that up to 10% of people with anorexia will die from complications of the disease.

## **6. Academic Pressure / Performance Mentality**

- The proportion of students reporting that pressure to get good grades creates a problem for them increased from 62 percent in 2001 to 79 percent this year, according to the report, which was issued by **The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans**, a Washington-based nonprofit educational association. In the last 10 years, the percentage of students that classified their academic performance pressure as “major” has risen 19 percent.
- Statistics show that students with psychological problems make up 21% of primary schools and 32% of secondary schools nationwide, the ratio for colleges and universities range from 16 to 25 percent.

## **7. Inconsistent Faith/ Doubt, Disbelief in God**

- New research has revealed, nearly two-thirds of teenagers don't believe in God and think that reality television is far more important than religion.
- 66% of teens do not believe a deity exists while 50 per cent have never prayed and 16% have never been to church.
- 59% of children believe religion has had a negative influence on the world.

## **8. Broken Families/ Fatherless Generation**

- About half the marriages in the United States today end in divorce, majorly effecting the children in these families
- Teens who are dealing with the divorce of their parents begin to suffer academically as early as a year before the divorce occurs.
- In reaction to the divorce, many teens will act out, talk back to their parents and teachers, sneak out or start fights. Some even get arrested or start dabbling in narcotics and alcohol. Teens are looking for an outlet for their frustrations and fears and many times acting out is the only way they know to decompress and get the attention they are looking for, regardless of whether it is positive or negative.
- Fifty percent of children of divorce have no direct contact with the non-custodial parent in a year. Think of that 50%!
- Sixty percent of second marriages also end in divorce so a teen may go through more than one divorce in his or her lifetime.
- Thirty five percent of the divorced households will not remarry, so over a third will be one parent households.

## **9. Bullying/ Teasing**

- Researchers estimate that 20 to 30 percent of school-age children are involved in bullying incidents, as either perpetrators or victims. Bullying can begin as early as preschool and intensify during transitional stages, such as starting school in 1st grade or going into middle school.
- Boys and girls get bullied in different ways. The most frequent type of bullying experienced by both boys and girls is verbal bullying. But that's where the similarities end.
  - Boys are far more likely to be hit, slapped, pushed, or be exposed to other types of physical bullying.
  - Girls, on the other hand, are at higher risk for being socially excluded, having rumors spread about them, or being targeted with sexual comments.

## **10. Teen Parenthood/ Teen Pregnancy**

- Teen Pregnancy affects education - only a third of teen mothers earn their high school diploma. And only 1.5% of teen moms will have a college degree by the age of 30.
- About 750,000 teens get pregnant in the United States each year. Nevada has the highest teen birth rate; 113 out of every 1,000 teens will get pregnant.
- About 1 in 3 women become pregnant at least once before the age of 20.
- The U.S. has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the industrialized world – twice as high as in England or Canada, and ten times higher as in Switzerland

## **Work Cited**

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#### Types of Abuse

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#### Most American Have Had Premarital Sex

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#### Family First Aid

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### **Drugs and Alcohol**

#### **Teen Drug Use Statistics**

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#### Teen Drug and Alcohol Abuse Information

<<http://www.teenzeen.org/>>

#### *The Health Effects of Teen Alcohol Use*

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## **Self Esteem/ Image**

### **Mom am I fat?**

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## **Academic Pressure / Performance Mentality**

### **Academic Pressure**

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### **Academic Pressure on Rise for Teens**

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## **Inconsistent Faith/ Doubt, Disbelief in God**

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## **Broken Families/ Fatherless Generation**

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### **Thee Great Divide**

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### **Dealing with Divorce**

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### **Bullying and Teasing: No Laughing Matter**

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