

Fact Sheet:

# Dating and Sexual Violence Among AANHPI Youth

Spring 2026



## A Note on Terminology

Youth (ages 13 to 24) often use informal terms to describe their romantic or sexual relationships. Just like the relationships they represent, these terms can be fluid or lack discrete definitions. Common ones include:

- Hooking up
- Dating
- Friends with benefits
- Seeing each other
- Situationship
- Just talking

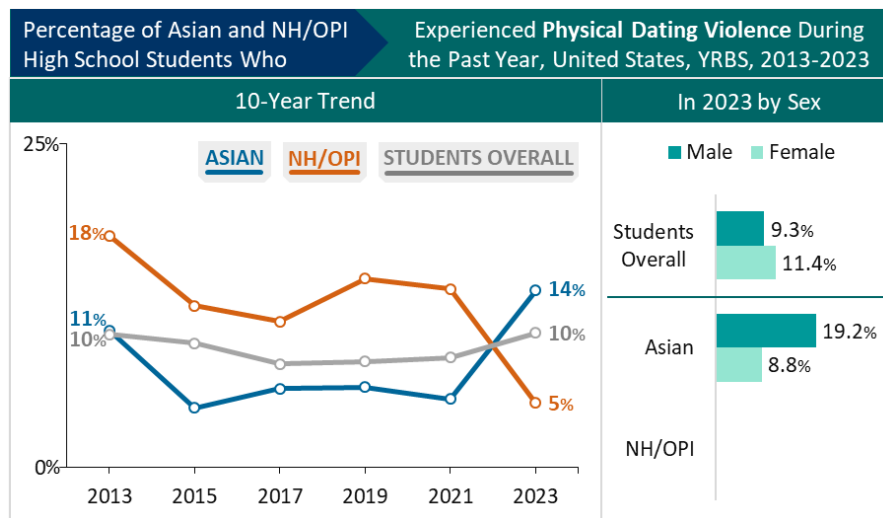
These labels do not necessarily imply that a relationship is exclusive or sexually intimate, and sometimes, adolescents prefer to avoid labels altogether and use “friend” instead. Regardless, abuse can happen in any relationship, no matter the label.

In the studies below, we use the terms selected by study authors.

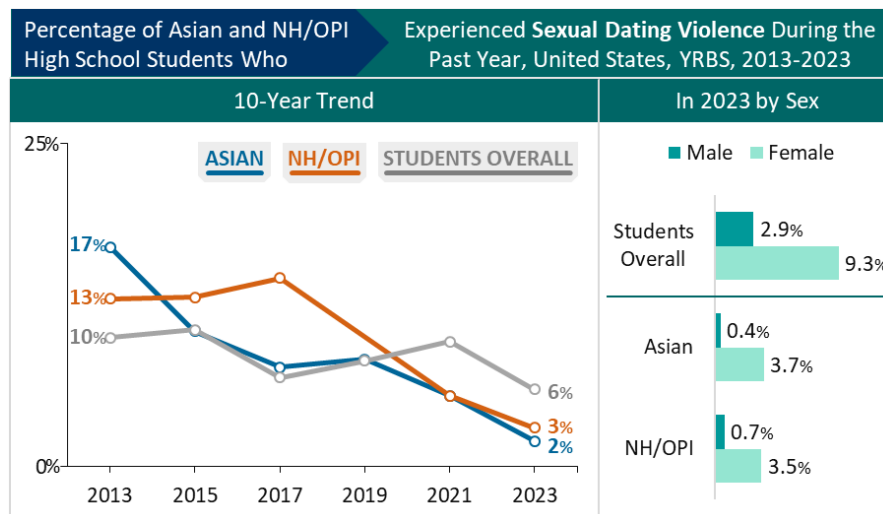
## High School Students

The charts below use data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a nationally representative survey of U.S. high school students, to show 10-year trends (2013-2023) and 2023 differences by sex in past-year physical and sexual dating violence among Asian and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (NH/OPI) students.<sup>1</sup>

- Physical dating violence rates among Asian and NH/OPI students changed over the past decade, with declines among NH/OPI students. In 2023, Asian male students reported higher rates of physical dating violence than Asian female students; estimates by sex are not shown for NH/OPI students due to small sample sizes. Overall student rates remained relatively stable compared to larger shifts among Asian and NH/OPI students.



- Sexual dating violence rates declined among Asian and NH/OPI students from 2013 to 2023. In 2023, Asian and NH/OPI female students reported higher rates of sexual dating violence than their male peers, while overall student rates remained higher than those reported among Asian and NH/OPI students.



- Around one in 10 Asian American adolescents experienced teen dating violence (TDV) in the past year (2015-2021), with higher risk among those who experienced school violence or bullying victimization.<sup>2</sup>
- Among lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning (LGBQ) adolescents, the highest rates of physical and sexual dating violence were observed in Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander GBQ boys (29% physical, 32% sexual) and LBQ girls (24% physical, 23% sexual).<sup>3</sup>
- Across all populations, 34.3% of girls and 29.6% of boys in high school experienced digital sexual coercion.<sup>4</sup> This includes being pressured to sext or to do sexual activities. While this study looked at the general population, there is a need for future research that measures disaggregated AANHPI & MENA data on the rate of technology-facilitated adolescent dating violence.

## College Students

- In an online survey of 181,752 students across 33 American universities on campus sexual assault and misconduct:<sup>5</sup>
  - 3.4% of Asian and 5.3% of NHOPI students reported experiencing penetration or sexual touching without voluntary agreement.
  - 28.9% of Asian and 39.9% of NHOPI students reported experiencing sexual harassment.
  - 6.7% of Asian and 9.3% of NHOPI students reported experiencing intimate partner violence.
  - 3.7% of Asian and 2.6% of NHOPI students reported experiencing stalking.
- 32.8% of Hmong-American college women in California have experienced some form of violence or abusive behavior from their romantic partner, including:
  - 24% had been yelled at or called names,
  - 18.3% had their partner check up on emails/phone calls,
  - 15.4% were isolated from friends and family,
  - 14.4% had something thrown at them that destroyed property,
  - 13.4% had been hit, punched, or kicked,
  - 11.5% were coerced or attempted to be coerced into sexual contact without consent
  - 7.7% had their financial resources controlled.<sup>6</sup>
- Asian American college students face multiple barriers to reporting sexual violence and help seeking, including insufficient familial support, fear of social repercussions from peers, negative perceptions acquired from media sources, and lack of trustworthy and accessible resources.<sup>7</sup>

## Promising Practices and Recommendations

- AANHPI college students with lived experiences of campus sexual assault, domestic violence, or dating violence and advocates who work with AANHPI survivors provided recommendations about improving on-campus prevention efforts, addressing the cultural stigma and shame around sex and mental health, the limitations of on-campus resources and support, and barriers surrounding the Title IX process.<sup>8</sup>
  - On-campus orientation and prevention should include concepts of power and affirmative consent in addition to education about SA, SV, and DV.
  - Flexible funding to sustain prevention efforts beyond one-off workshops.
  - Schools should require social and ethnic organizations such as Greek life Sororities and Fraternities to undergo violence prevention workshops and trainings.
  - On-campus support services for survivors should be closely located so students can access mental health, survivor advocacy, sexual health, and culturally specific resources.
  - Coordination and integration training between sex-based and race-based discrimination on campus. Staff should be trained to handle both reports of racism and sexism, as AANHPI survivors and advocates note that both are often involved in their experiences. Staff and anyone involved in the Title IX process should receive trauma-informed and cultural competency training.
  - Strong partnerships with off-campus culturally specific organizations and resources for workshops, training of staff, and for referrals for AANHPI students seeking therapists and psychiatrists who share the same cultural, racial or ethnic identity or speak the same language.
  - Full interpretation and translation for students in the form of a peer or staff advocate. Resources should be translated into the primary languages for international student populations.<sup>8</sup>
- Advocates and educators working to support students can provide non-sexual examples of asking for consent in their trainings, worksheets, and sessions to make the concept more approachable for potential survivors from AANHPI & MENA backgrounds. It can be helpful to model consent and frame the information as healthy relationship material rather than teen dating violence. Also, parents of middle and high school students may be more receptive if they are given the option to opt out of a prevention program or other training activities. It is especially important when working with AANHPI & MENA students and families to reframe boundaries not as selfish, disrespectful, and shameful, but rather as making sure your needs are being met.<sup>9</sup>
- South Asian young people aged 16 to 21 recommended that parents should be involved in conversations about teen dating violence and healthy relationships to build on protective factor of close-knit communities. This also could address the stigma against dating in South Asian communities.<sup>10</sup>

- Community-based participatory research (CBPR) principles show promise for refugee and immigrant adolescents peer leaders. Karen peer leaders aged 15-22 facilitated small groups. All peer leaders learned about healthy relationship and had a better understanding about relationship abuse. All peer leaders also developed their leadership skills such as improved public speaking, interpersonal communication, and active listening.<sup>11</sup>
- Participatory action research including photovoice activities have shown promise for South Asian college students seeking to heal from dating violence experiences, according to a study that uses the Par/Des(i) framework and other culturally responsive methods.<sup>12</sup>
- Arab American youth recommend that prevention programs include educational materials about consent, communication, and healthy relationships for youth in addition to community dialogues across generations. Prevention education should also target parents, religious leaders, educators, trained professionals to address intergenerational social norms related to IPV.<sup>13</sup>

## Selected Translated Materials

- Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence ([English](#)) | API-GBV
- Creating a Safety Plan ([English](#)) | Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse
- Materials on domestic violence in over 115 languages | [Hot Peach Pages](#)

## Resources

### National Hotlines

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**  
Provides 24/7 free and confidential support, including crisis intervention, DV education, safety planning, and referrals to local service providers. Assistance is available in English, Spanish, and 200+ other languages through interpreter services.  
  
*Live Chat:* [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org) | *Call:* 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) | *Text:* START to 88788.
- **Love is Respect**  
Offers 24/7 free and confidential support for teens, young adults, and their loved ones seeking help or information about healthy relationships and dating abuse.  
  
*Live Chat:* [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org) | *Call:* 1-866-331-9474 | *Text:* LOVEIS to 22522
- **National Sexual Assault Hotline**  
Provides victims of sexual assault with 27/7 access to free, confidential services.  
  
*Live Chat:* <http://online.rainn.org> | *Call:* 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

## Resources for Youth

- [Break the Cycle](#): inspires and supports young people to build healthy relationships
- [National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance \(NQAPIA\)](#): a network of LGBTQ+ AANHPI organizations

## Directories

- [Directory of DV Programs Serving Asians, Native Hawaiians, & Pacific Islanders](#) | API-GBV
- [International List of Sexual & Domestic Violence Agencies](#) | Hot Peach Pages

## Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

For questions, information, publications, training requests, and technical assistance related to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and/or stalking in Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) communities, visit [www.api-gbv.org](http://www.api-gbv.org) or email [info@api-gbv.org](mailto:info@api-gbv.org)

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