

Teen violence

[Experience](#), [Anger](#)



Teen Violence Author Note Teen Violence Teen aggression and violence is a growing concern in our society. It appears on the news almost daily, from bullying to weapons on campus. When we hear the words teen violence, most of us think of school shootings. The situation has escalated over the past few decades and now more and more of our youth are dying by the hands of their peers. In this paper we will explore the situation of teen violence, causes of aggression, and what we can do to prevent future acts of teen violence. Teens act out aggression in many ways. Kassin, Fein, & Markus (2011) defines aggression as behavior intended to harm another individual (pg. 436). When it is an extreme act of aggression then it becomes violence. One theory as to why teens act out in violence involves modeling aggressive behaviors. When teens are consistently exposed to violence at home, video games, in the movies, or on the street, they are more inclined to copy such behaviors. Others, who experience bullying or teasing, become enraged enough to begin acting out in revenge. This can be another cause of teen violence. Lashing out in response to what has been seen or experienced does not account for all instances of teen violence, however. According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than one in three high school students say they have been in a physical fight in the past year. In many movies and television shows torture and brutal acts of murder are shown as if they are a normal part of daily life. They may also influence young people the value of revenge, and portray violence as a way to resolve issues. They do not need to personally experience crime and brutality because these things are already fed daily into their heads: through the television, news, movies and the internet. Unless parents are monitoring what their children are being

exposed to than they are more than likely being exposed to this type of programming on a regular basis. There are also certain situational factors that may play an important role in causing violent behavior. Teens that are left alone may find aggression entertaining. Drinking alcohol also is an important immediate situational factor that can precipitate violence. Being in a highly stressful situation can also trigger aggressive behavior. For example, a teenager that is physically or mentally abused by their parents may reach a point where they may retaliate on their parents. Even worse, they may take their anger and retaliate on classmates. While thoughts of aggression occur from time to time in most people's lives, it is normal. Teens however, are more likely to take more drastic approaches with their behavior because they cannot yet see the end result. There are some things that can contribute to the likelihood of a teen acting out in a violent manner. Violent thoughts and dwelling on those thoughts can lead to the actual act of violence. Having accessibility to weapons to carry out violence is another cause of teen violence. This is true when teens have access to guns and other weapons. So, while an exact cause of teen violence cannot be pinpointed, there are definite factors that contribute to the likelihood of it actually taking place. Younger generations often socialize, hang out, and communicate by cell phone or online, rather than in person. They prefer to text rather than talk on the phone, and often prefer to socialize on Facebook or Twitter. This has become a new way to bully or to show aggression and is being called cyber bullying. Although it may not be physical violence, it can be just as emotionally harmful with lasting effects. As punishment, parents may take away the computer or cell phone and disconnect the Internet,

some teens have responded with violence towards the computer, themselves or even their parents. Others have fallen into depression. Most of the time, children find other ways to connect to the Web and play games. They may simply do it at friends' house. The search is on to find the causes of teen aggression. Sahley (2004), states that some scientists have reported a tendency toward anger and aggression can be inherited and found in aggressive genes. This predisposes a teen to anger, violence, and depression, and this gene could be passed on to his or her children. Children are the genetic and environmental products of their parents. The cause of negative behavior can be a direct result of not only genes, but brain chemistry. According to the CDC, teen violence can also be caused by frustration due to learning disorders, emotional distress, or attention deficits. In some cases teens do not know how to appropriately channel their frustrations and act out in anger as a form of release. Kassin, Fein, & Markus (2011), states “ recognizing that aggression has multiple levels of causes, multisystemic therapy has been effective in reducing aggressive behaviors among violent adolescents” (pg. 481). After so many incidents of school shooting in the US, a study was done to find out why. According to Kassin, Fein, & Markus (2011), the initial findings indicated that the best way to predict those most likely to aggress was to listen to what the individuals themselves had to say, because many of them revealed, in one way or another, their aggressive thoughts and hostile attitudes before they acted out. Teachers need to be aware of their students behavior at all times. Reporting all signs of aggression and helping those students find a way to deal with their anger. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure the health

and well-being of their children. In order to prevent teen violence and aggression it must first start in the home. Parents need to be able to communicate with their children. They should be aware of what their children are watching on television and on the internet. Some children may be aggressive at early ages which can be managed with counseling and learned parenting skills. It is then our responsibility as a society to influence our youth to be strong, positive people. References Kassin, S., Fein, S., & Markus, H. (2011). *Social psychology* (8th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Sahley, B. J., (2004). *Teen Anger and Aggression*. Neurotransmitter Deficiency Pain & Stress Publications. [www. cdc. gov/ncipc/factsheets/yvfacts. htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/yvfacts.htm)