



February is National Dating Violence Awareness Month!

Every February the nation recognizes Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. This month is dedicated to increasing awareness about dating abuse within teenage relationships and the resources that are available for teen survivors.

Most teenagers do not experience physical aggression when they date. However, for some teens, abuse is a very real part of dating relationships. Healthy relationships consist of trust, honesty, respect, equality, and compromise.

Teen dating abuse and violence can negatively influence the development of healthy sexuality, intimacy and identity as youth grow into adulthood. The abuse can also increase the risk of physical injury, poor academic performance, binge drinking, suicide attempts, unhealthy sexual behaviors, substance abuse, negative body image, poor self-esteem, and violence in future relationships.

Signs to look for in an abusive relationship:

- **Control.** One dating partner makes all the decisions and tells the other what to do, what to wear, or who to spend time with. He or she is unreasonably jealous, and/or tries to isolate the other partner from his or her friends and family.
- **Hostility.** One dating partner picks a fight with or antagonizes the other dating partner. This may lead to one dating partner changing his or her behavior in order to avoid upsetting the other.
- **Dishonesty.** One dating partner lies to or keeps information from the other. One dating partner steals from the other.
- **Disrespect.** One dating partner makes fun of the opinions and interests of the other partner or purposely destroys something that belongs to the partner.



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- **Dependence.** One dating partner feels that he or she “cannot live without” the other. He or she may threaten to do something drastic if the relationship ends.
- **Intimidation.** One dating partner tries to control aspects of the other's life by making the other partner fearful or timid. One dating partner may attempt to keep his or her partner from friends and family or threaten violence or a break-up.
- **Physical violence.** One partner uses force to get his or her way (such as hitting, slapping, grabbing, or shoving).
- **Sexual violence.** One dating partner pressures or forces the other into sexual activity against his or her will.

Strategies to prevent teen violence are as follows:

Teen dating violence can be prevented, especially when there is a focus on **reducing risk factors** as well as **fostering protective factors**. Teens are empowered through family, friends, and others (including role models such as teachers, coaches, mentors, and youth group leaders) to lead healthy lives and establish healthy relationships. It is important to create spaces, such as school communities, where the behavioral norms are not tolerant of abuse in dating relationships. The message must be clear that treating people in abusive ways will not be accepted and policies must enforce this message to keep students safe.

Be a catalyst for change. Use the Health Finder.gov NHO Tool kit, How To Plan An Awareness Event, list of resources, weekly facts, and more.

<https://www.youth.gov/youth-topics/teen-dating-violence>

NHO Toolkits

Need help making a difference? Visit www.healthfinder.gov for more information on NHO Toolkits!

How can Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month make a difference?


Use this month to raise awareness about teen dating violence and act toward a solution – both at home and in our communities.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage parents to talk with their teens about healthy relationships.
- Ask teachers to hold classroom discussions about dating violence and prevention – or to invite speakers in to talk about these issues.
- Help schools to create policies that support healthy relationships and involve student voices.

How can you help spread the word?

This toolkit is full of ideas to help people take action. For example:

- [Add information about preventing teen dating violence to your newsletter.](#)
- [Tweet about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.](#)
- [Add this Web badge to your website.](#)
- [Join the conversation about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.](#) 

Get the Word Out

[Sample Announcement for Newsletter, Listserv, or Media Release](#)

Sample Tweets

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month! Here are some ways to get involved:
<https://www.loveisrespect.org/teendvmonth/> #teenDVmonth

[Tweet This!](#)

Fact: 1 in 10 teens who date has been physically abused by someone they've gone out with. Make a difference: <https://bit.ly/2PrWuB4>

[Tweet This!](#)

#DatingViolence can be both physical and emotional. Learn more about it here:
<http://1.usa.gov/bfPeDu> #teenDVmonth

[Tweet This!](#)

Be a role model – you can teach your kids a lot by treating them and others with respect. For more tips: <http://bit.ly/2hCwiTx>

[Tweet This!](#)

It's never too early to teach your kids about sex and relationships. Here are some ways to start the convo: <http://1.usa.gov/R3ou97>

[Tweet This!](#)

Web Badge

[Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month – Talk to your kids about respect.](#)

Get Involved

1. Take action to raise awareness about teen dating violence!
2. [Write a letter to a public official](#) – like a mayor or governor – and ask them to take action against dating abuse.
3. Wear **ORANGE** on February 14 to raise awareness about dating violence in your community.
4. [Read and share the National Respect Announcement](#) on Facebook or Tumblr.
5. [Share materials from loveisrespect](#) about healthy relationships and the warning signs of abuse.

Resources for Dating Violence Victims

DCF: New Jersey Youth Resource Spot <http://www.njyrs.org/Resources>

Love is Respect

866-331-9474

866-331-8453 TTY

www.loveisrespect.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-SAFE (7233)

800-787-3224 TTY

www.ndvh.org

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) Hotline

800-656-HOPE (4673)

www.rainn.org

The 2020 National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence will be held April 28-30th, 2020 in Chicago, IL at the Hilton Chicago.

Visit www.nchdv.org for updates on the call for abstracts, registration, travel, and more!

Registration for the Conference is Now Open!

National Hotlines

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE

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

National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline: 1-866-331-9474

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

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE

<https://www.rainn.org/>



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