

# Concept Paper: Giving Kansas School Counselors the Training and Tools to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence



## Gender-Based Violence and Teens

Teen gender violence, also known by terms such as teen dating violence, relationship abuse, and domestic violence, is an issue that demands attention. Teen gender violence is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as the physical, sexual, or psychological/emotional violence within a dating relationship, as well as stalking. It can occur in person or electronically and may occur between a current or former dating partner.

Teen gender violence is a public health issue that affects teens and adolescents throughout the United States-including Kansas- every day. In fact, in Kansas alone, 11% of high school students report being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend.<sup>1</sup> Nationally, one in four adolescents reports verbal, emotional, physical or sexual dating violence each year.<sup>2</sup> Violent behavior typically begins between the ages of 12 and 18 and then escalates. According to the CDC, "As teens develop emotionally, they are heavily influenced by their relationship experiences. Healthy relationship behaviors can have a positive effect on a teen's emotional development. Unhealthy, abusive or violent relationships can cause short term and long term negative effects, or consequences to the developing teen."

Over the last few decades, increased attention has begun to be paid to prevention of teen gender violence. A number of prevention programs have been developed and implemented, with varying degrees of success. For the majority of these programs, prevention can be broadly segregated into two categories; primary and secondary prevention. It has been shown that primary prevention can be of critical importance, as this may provide a critical window of opportunity to mold appropriate attitudes and behaviors, since teenagers are likely just beginning to form dating relationships.<sup>3</sup> Secondary prevention programs generally target high school or college students, and focus on addressing violence already occurring in a relationship. Both of these methods are important; while teen gender violence is a serious public health issue, it is also one that is preventable, requiring a comprehensive strategy to stop it before it starts.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control (2012) 1991-2011 High School Risk Behavior Survey

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control. Dating Matters: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships

<sup>3</sup>Sudermann, M., Jaffe, P., & Hastings, e. (1995) Violence prevention programs in secondary (high) schools. In E. Peled, P. Jaffe, & J. Edleson (Eds.), *Ending the cycle of violence: Community responses to children of battered women*. (pp. 232-255).

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## **A Lack of Training and Resources**

While teen dating violence is rampant, many schools and counselors who are on the front lines- working with teens every day- are not adequately prepared to assist students and deal with gender-based violence in an effective way. Teachers, school counselors and administrators report a lack of knowledge, training, and established guidelines for preventing and responding to student-reported instances of gender-based violence and a desire for a more comprehensive approach to implementing both primary and secondary prevention strategies.

## **Preparing Schools**

School counselors are often the professionals that students turn to in times of personal crisis. We believe that, by providing counselors across the state of Kansas with education, training, and easily-implementable curriculum, we can not only help counselors to more effectively prevent and respond to violence, but also be prepared to train their colleagues- teachers, administrators and school staff- to do the same.

Our proposed program will bring together a team of experts including nationally-known practitioners in the fields of gender-based violence and sexual assault, school counselors and instructors of counseling in higher education. This team will work together to understand the needs of schools when addressing the following subjects:

- How can schools best prevent teen gender violence from occurring?
- How should schools respond to victims of gender-based violence?
- How should schools respond to perpetrators of gender-based violence?
- How should schools involve families of victims and perpetrators of gender-based violence?
- How should schools respond to student effected by gender-based violence in the home?

From the collaboration of our team of experts, we will produce a toolkit for counselors to prepare them to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. This toolkit will include:

- Advocacy- how to best help students acquire needed services through direct service or referral
- Policy- how to create school- or district-wide policies for dealing with gender-based violence
- Title IX- how to improve TIX compliance
- Prevention- school-specific development and implementation of primary and secondary prevention programming
- Red flags- warning signs for teen dating violence
- Response- how to talk to both victims, perpetrators and bystanders of gender-based violence
- Healthy relationships- helping students to understand healthy vs. unhealthy behaviors
- Coordinated response teams- how to collaborate to keep students safe

In addition to the toolkit, we will create a curriculum and corresponding training to prepare school counselors to implement the toolkit as well as to train their colleagues to do the same. Over the course of 18 months, we will provide four area trainings throughout the state of Kansas.

## **Desired Outcomes**

Counselors will be encouraged to develop a team of key school stakeholders to create a comprehensive and integrated approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence at their institutions. These coordinated school response teams will promote a focused and coherent system of support that encourages respectful, non-violent relationships. The project's ultimate goal is to empower schools to:

- prevent abusive behaviors by engaging faculty, staff and students in promoting healthy relationships;
- ensure that the institution is prepared to respond promptly and effectively to incidents and reports of violence when they do occur; and
- ultimately to change school norms so that all students, faculty and staff hold themselves and each other to respectful and non-violent standards of interpersonal behavior.

## **About Jana's Campaign**

Jana's Campaign is a national education and gender violence prevention organization with the mission of reducing gender and relationship violence. With offices in Kansas and Colorado, Jana's Campaign works to implement its five program areas: public awareness and community action; education, prevention and intervention; public policy advocacy; campus action initiative; and engaging men and boys. Jana's Campaign was created in honor of the late Jana Mackey and all victims of domestic violence. Jana was 25 year-old University of Kansas law student who was killed by her ex-boyfriend in 2008. To learn more about Jana's Campaign, see [www.janascampaign.org](http://www.janascampaign.org).

## Dating and Gender Violence Survey

The purpose of this survey is to determine secondary school counselors' familiarity with various laws and issues relating to teen dating violence. The nature of teen dating violence can be multi-faceted and may include one or more of the following behaviors: physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse or stalking (via in-person or technological means).<sup>(1)</sup> Throughout this survey, the collective of these behaviors will be referred to as teen dating violence.

This survey is one of the first steps in developing new programming specifically for middle and high school counselors with the ultimate goal of helping them address teen dating violence. With this data, we plan to design programming that will empower the counselors and their schools to prevent unhealthy social and dating behaviors, respond promptly and effectively to incidents of violence, and eventually change school attitudes to promote respectful interactions and healthy dating relationships.

On average, 21% of adolescent girls and 10% of boys are victims of some form of abuse initiated by a dating partner. Young women between the ages of 14 and 17 represent 38% of those victimized by dating partner violence.<sup>(2)</sup> Among adult victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, 22% of women and 15% of men first experienced some form of partner violence between 11 and 17 years of age.<sup>(3)</sup> Nearly two-thirds of all adolescents that experience teen dating violence never report the abuse to anyone.

Jana's Campaign is a national education and gender violence prevention organization. With offices in Kansas and Colorado, the mission of Jana's Campaign is to provide quality educational programming that prevents gender and relationship violence. Working through secondary schools, colleges and universities and community-based organizations, Jana's Campaign delivers specialized prevention strategies and curricula that are designed to prevent violence, build healthy relationships and create new social norms. The organization was created in honor of Jana Mackey, a 25-year-old University of Kansas law student who was killed by her ex-boyfriend in 2008. To learn more about Jana's Campaign see [www.janascampaign.org](http://www.janascampaign.org).

There are two sections to this survey. The first section contains brief statements regarding the level of understanding- by your school and yourself- of teen dating violence with multiple-choice responses based on your level of agreement. The last portion includes a few short answer questions. Please feel free to answer these questions in as much detail as you see fit. Listed on the next page is a list of terms and their definitions that will be used throughout this survey.



## Terms and Definitions

**Protection From Abuse (PFA) Order:** a signed order from a judge that prevents a perpetrator of abuse from further harming the victim.

**Sexual Violence:** a sexual act committed against someone without that person's freely-given consent. (Ex. sexual assault, rape, etc.)

**Teen Dating Violence:** an abusive act that may include physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual behaviors or stalking initiated by one person in a dating relationship.

**Title IX:** an article of the Education Amendments of 1972 that prohibits discrimination based on sex in any educational program that receives funding from the federal government. Sex discrimination under Title IX includes acts of sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

**Unhealthy/Abusive Relationship:** abusive and coercive behaviors used to exhibit power and control over a current or former dating partner. (Ex. extreme jealousy, controlling social interactions and personal behaviors, physical and sexual violence, stalking, etc.)

(1) Center for Disease Control, 2016.

<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/teen-dating-violence-factsheet-a.pdf>

(2) Love is Respect, Empowering Youth to End Dating Abuse, 2014. [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)

(3) National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2011.

[http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)

## Multiple-Choice Questions

Please respond, on a scale of 1-5, whether you strongly disagree (1), somewhat disagree (2), do not know (3), somewhat agree (4), or strongly agree (5) with the following statements.

Statement	1- Strongly Disagree	2- Somewhat Disagree	3- Do Not Know	4- Somewhat Agree	5- Strongly Agree
1. I feel teen dating violence is a concern for young people in my school.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I recognize a need to address teen dating violence at my school and in my community.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I can identify the warning signs of a potentially unhealthy or abusive relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am aware of resources to prevent teen dating violence such as evidence-based curriculum, prevention programming, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am aware of resources to respond to teen dating violence, such as educational accommodations, PFA orders, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am familiar with available domestic violence services in my area.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am comfortable referring students who experience teen dating violence to domestic violence service agencies in my area.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel students at my school understand and know how to respond to teen dating violence.	1	2	3	4	5



**Statement**

1- Strongly Disagree      2- Somewhat Disagree      3- Do Not Know      4- Somewhat Agree      5- Strongly Agree

9. My school administrators and teachers understand that Title IX includes K-12 and higher education and includes requirements for being a mandatory reporter for teen dating violence.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I understand that Title IX includes K-12 and includes bullying, teen dating/sexual violence, and stalking.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel skilled and competent in my skills to provide best practice counseling to an individual involved in an unhealthy relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My school has sufficient policies and procedures in place to prevent and respond to incidents of teen dating violence and I feel adequately prepared to implement and enforce them.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The school counselors in my building feel prepared to respond to incidents of teen dating violence. This includes responding to and making reasonable accommodations to the victim, the perpetrator, and the parents or guardians involved.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am confident in my ability to provide professional development for administrators, faculty, and staff to identify and respond to teen dating violence.	1	2	3	4	5



### **Open-ended Questions**

1. In terms of preventing and responding to teen dating violence, what is your school currently doing well? In what areas do you believe they lack sufficient information or policies that could hinder their ability to address the issue? (Ex. adherence to laws and regulations, specific policies, procedures, and programs, recognizing warning signs, ability to investigate incidents internally, etc.)

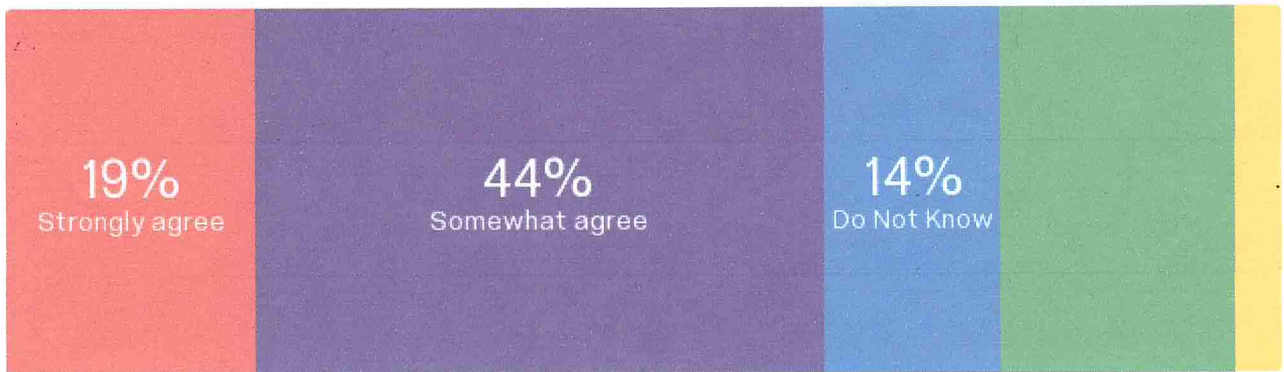
2. What information or education would be the most helpful to you when talking to students, school staff, and parents about teen dating violence and healthy relationships? (Ex. Title IX, statistics on teen dating violence, information on the laws regarding dating violence, indicators of abuse or violence, evidence-based education and curriculum, prevention and response programming, etc.)

3. Do you have any additional comments or questions regarding the purpose or content of this survey?

# Dating and Gender Violence Survey

June 10th 2016, 2:17 pm CDT

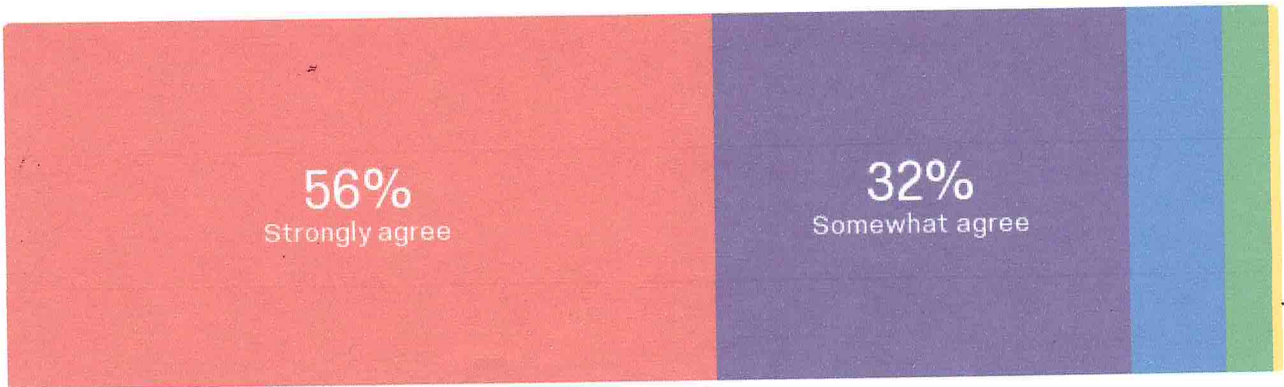
**Q4 - 1. I feel teen dating violence is a concern for young people in my school.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	19.44%	21
Somewhat agree	44.44%	48
Do Not Know	13.89%	15
Somewhat disagree	18.52%	20
Strongly disagree	3.70%	4
Total	100%	108

##/

**Q5 - 2. I recognize a need to address teen dating violence at my school and in my community.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	55.56%	60
Somewhat agree	32.41%	35
Do Not Know	7.41%	8
Somewhat disagree	3.70%	4
Strongly disagree	0.93%	1
Total	100%	108

#2



# Dating and Gender Violence Survey

June 10th 2016, 2:17 pm CDT

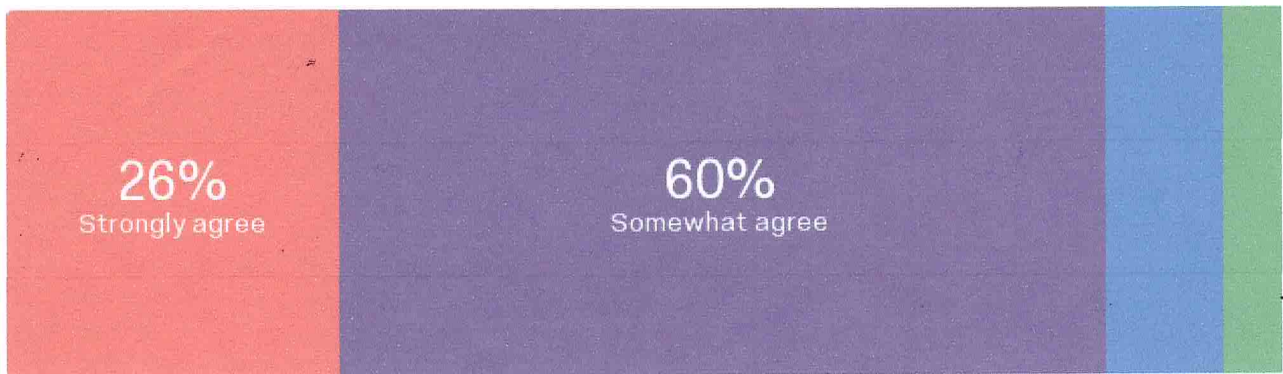
**Q4 - 1. I feel teen dating violence is a concern for young people in my school.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	19.44%	21
Somewhat agree	44.44%	48
Do Not Know	13.89%	15
Somewhat disagree	18.52%	20
Strongly disagree	3.70%	4
Total	100%	108

##/

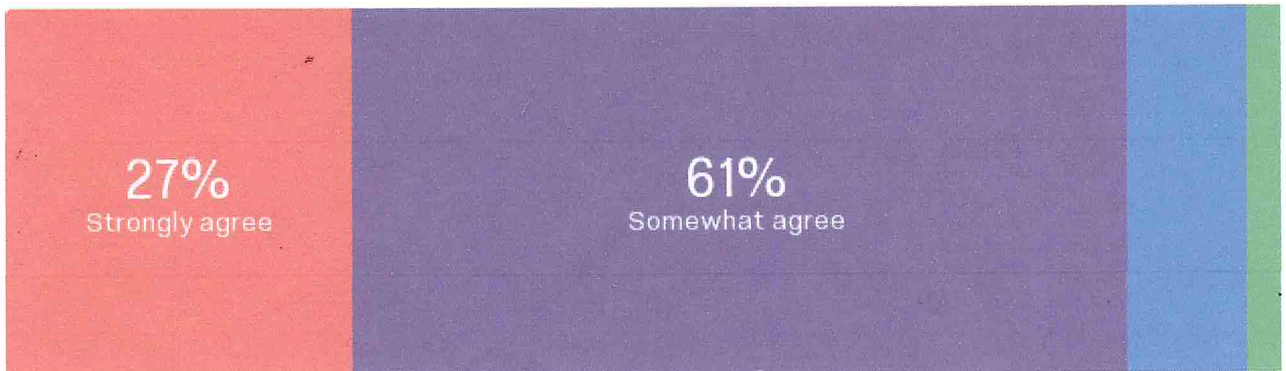
**Q6 - 3. I can identify the warning signs of a potentially unhealthy or abusive relationship.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	25.93%	28
Somewhat agree	60.19%	65
Do Not Know	9.26%	10
Somewhat disagree	4.63%	5
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Total	100%	108

#3

**Q7 - 4. I can identify the warning signs of a potentially unhealthy or abusive relationship.**

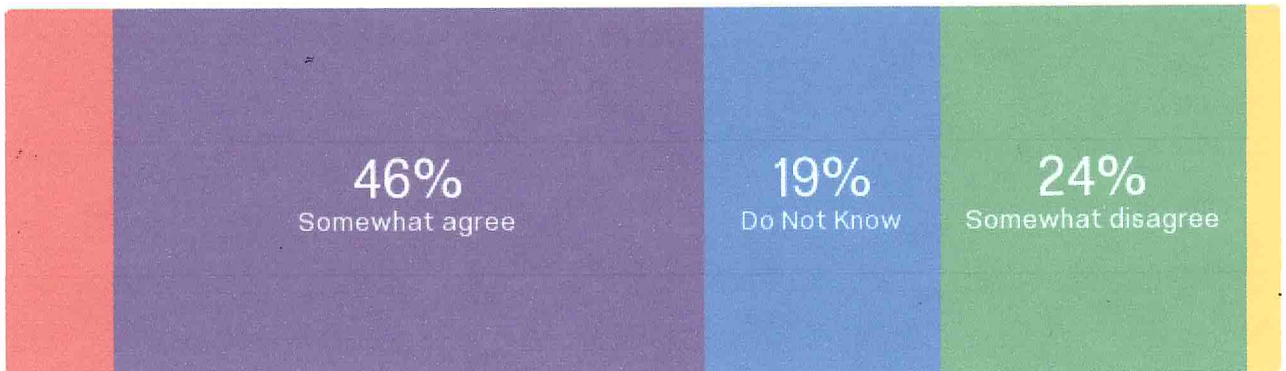


Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	27.10%	29
Somewhat agree	60.75%	65
Do Not Know	9.35%	10
Somewhat disagree	2.80%	3
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Total	100%	107

# 4



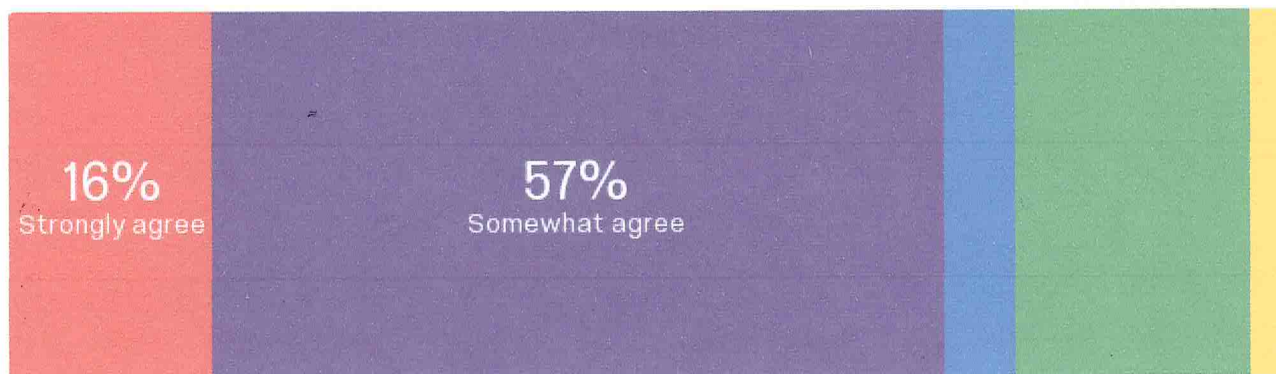
**Q8 - 5. I am aware of resources to respond to teen dating violence, such as educational accommodations, PFA orders, etc.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	8.33%	9
Somewhat agree	46.30%	50
Do Not Know	18.52%	20
Somewhat disagree	24.07%	26
Strongly disagree	2.78%	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>108</b>

#5

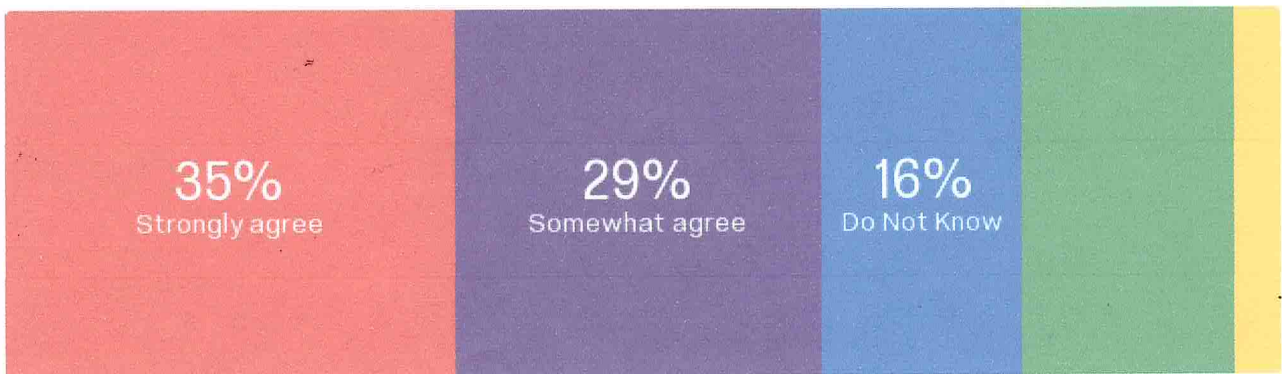
**Q9 - 6. I am familiar with available domestic violence services in my area.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	15.74%	17
Somewhat agree	57.41%	62
Do Not Know	5.56%	6
Somewhat disagree	18.52%	20
Strongly disagree	2.78%	3
Total	100%	108

# 6

**Q10 - 7. I am comfortable referring students who experience teen dating violence to domestic violence service agencies in my area.**

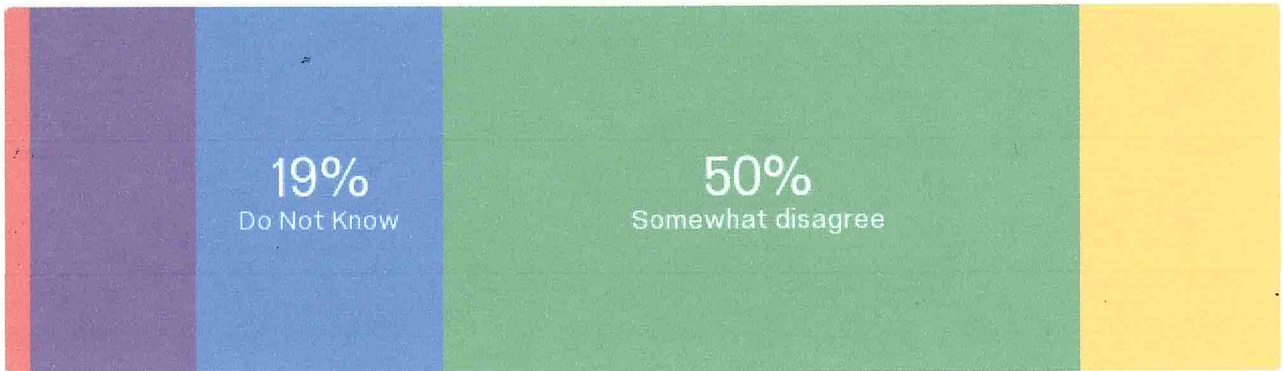


Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	35.19%	38
Somewhat agree	28.70%	31
Do Not Know	15.74%	17
Somewhat disagree	16.67%	18
Strongly disagree	3.70%	4
Total	100%	108

#7



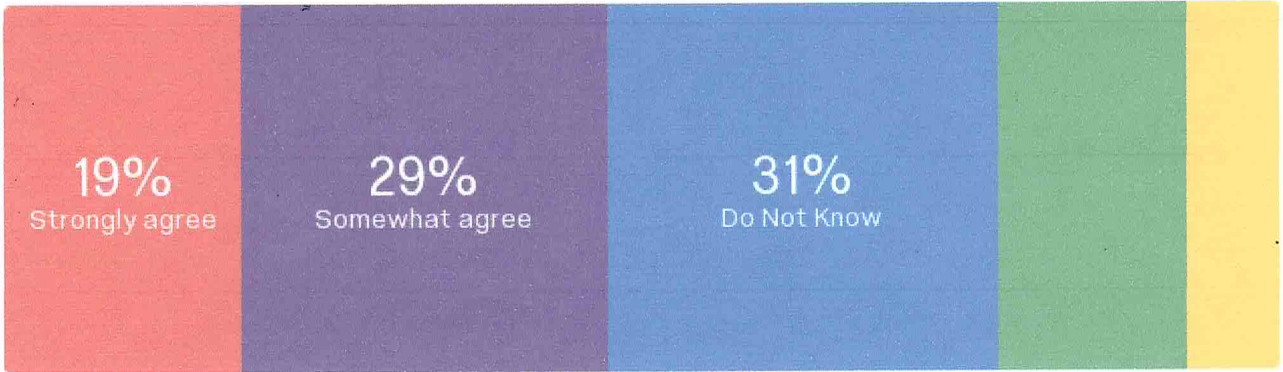
**Q11 - 8. I feel students at my school understand and know how to respond to teen dating violence.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	1.85%	2
Somewhat agree	12.96%	14
Do Not Know	19.44%	21
Somewhat disagree	50.00%	54
Strongly disagree	15.74%	17
Total	100%	108

# 8

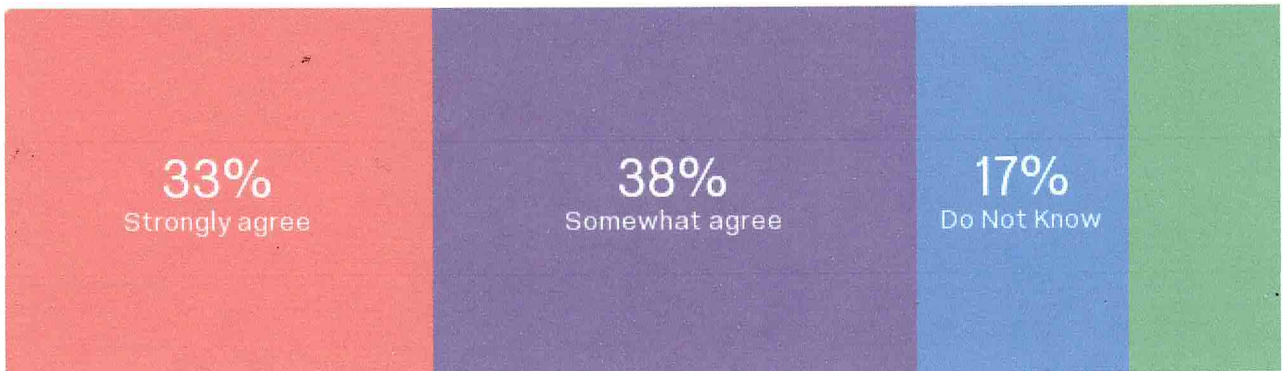
**Q12 - 9. My school administrators and teachers understand that Title IX includes K-12 and higher education and includes requirements for being a mandatory reporter for teen dating violence.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	18.52%	20
Somewhat agree	28.70%	31
Do Not Know	30.56%	33
Somewhat disagree	14.81%	16
Strongly disagree	7.41%	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>108</b>

# 9

**Q13 - 10. I understand that Title IX includes K-12 and includes bullying, teen dating/sexual violence, and stalking.**

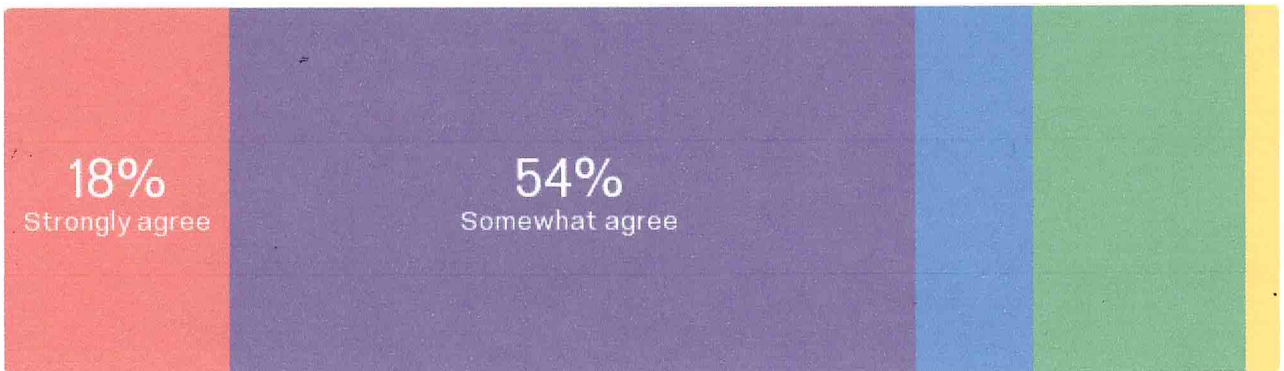


Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	33.33%	36
Somewhat agree	37.96%	41
Do Not Know	16.67%	18
Somewhat disagree	12.04%	13
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
Total	100%	108

# 10



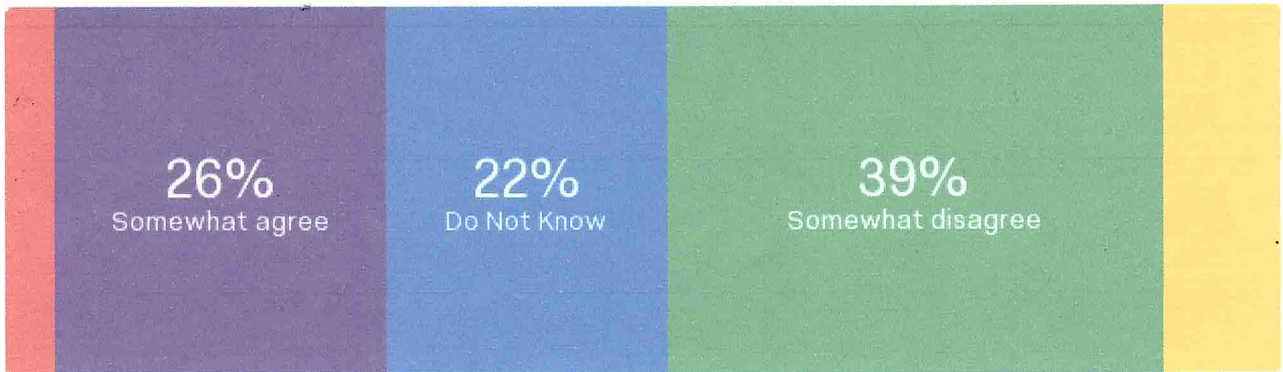
**Q14 - 11. I feel skilled and competent in my skills to provide best practice counseling to an individual involved in an unhealthy relationship.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	17.59%	19
Somewhat agree	53.70%	58
Do Not Know	9.26%	10
Somewhat disagree	16.67%	18
Strongly disagree	2.78%	3
Total	100%	108

# 11

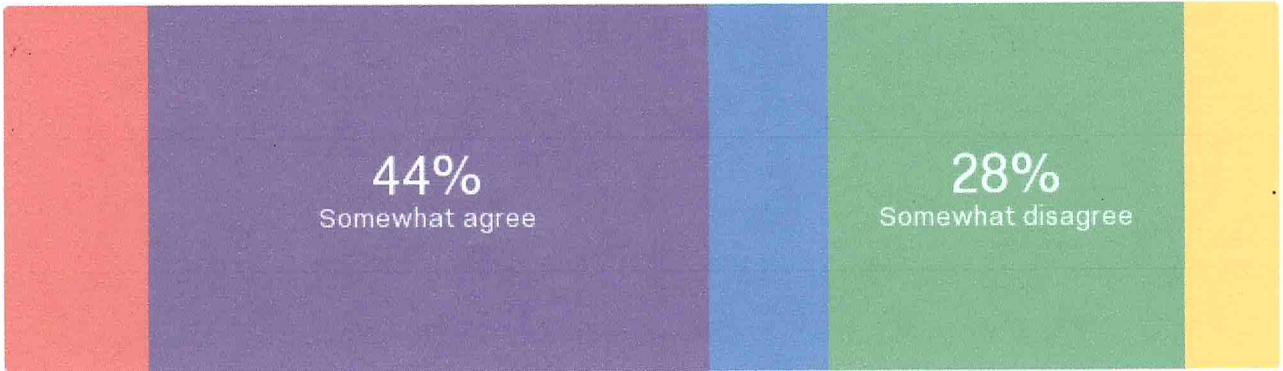
**Q15 - 12. My school has sufficient policies and procedures in place to prevent and respond to incidents of teen dating violence and I feel adequately prepared to implement and enforce them.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	3.70%	4
Somewhat agree	25.93%	28
Do Not Know	22.22%	24
Somewhat disagree	38.89%	42
Strongly disagree	9.26%	10
Total	100%	108

# 12

**Q16 - 13. The school counselors in my building feel prepared to respond to incidents of teen dating violence. This includes responding to and making reasonable accommodations to the victim, the perpetrator, and the parents or guardians involved.**

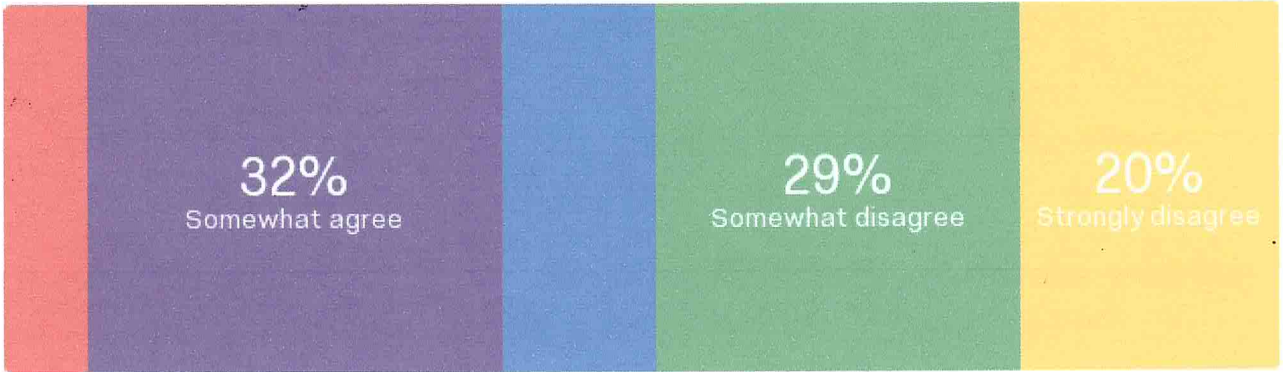


Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	11.21%	12
Somewhat agree	43.93%	47
Do Not Know	9.35%	10
Somewhat disagree	28.04%	30
Strongly disagree	7.48%	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>107</b>

#13



**Q17 - 14. I am confident in my ability to provide professional development for administrators, faculty, and staff to identify and respond to teen dating violence.**



Answer	%	Count
Strongly agree	6.48%	7
Somewhat agree	32.41%	35
Do Not Know	12.04%	13
Somewhat disagree	28.70%	31
Strongly disagree	20.37%	22
Total	100%	108

# 14

## **Dating and Gender Violence Survey**

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide during the survey that you no longer wish to participate, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you withdraw from participating at any time, you will not be penalized in any way.

We will do our best to keep your information confidential. All data is stored in a protected electronic format. Your responses will be confidential and we do not require personally identifiable information such as your name, your school's name, etc. To help protect your confidentiality, the survey will not contain information that will personally identify you. Please do not write any personally identifiable information anywhere on the survey in order to protect your confidentiality.

If you have any questions about this study or the results of the survey, you may contact Jana's Campaign at [janascampaign@gmail.com](mailto:janascampaign@gmail.com) or (785) 656-0324.

## Dating and Gender Violence Survey

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey. The purpose of this survey is to determine school counselors' familiarity with various laws and issues relating to gender and dating violence. This survey is one of the first steps in developing new programming specifically for middle and high school counselors with the ultimate goal of helping them address teen dating violence. With the data we collect, we plan to design programming to empower the counselors and their schools to prevent unhealthy social and dating behaviors, respond promptly and effectively to incidents of violence, and eventually change school attitudes to promote respectful interactions and healthy dating relationships.

Nearly 1.5 million high school students in the United States are physically abused by dating partners every year.<sup>1</sup> On average, one in three adolescent girls is a victim of some form of abuse initiated by a dating partner.<sup>2</sup> Over 20 percent of female high school students and around 13 percent of male high school students report being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.<sup>3</sup> Approximately two-thirds of all adolescents that experience teen dating violence never report the abuse to anyone.<sup>4</sup> The severity and frequency of dating violence are often higher when at least one of the partners experienced or perpetrated abuse during an adolescent dating relationship.<sup>5</sup>

There are two sections to this survey. The first section contains brief statements regarding your schools and your own understanding of teen dating violence with multiple-choice responses based on the level of agreement. The last portion includes a few short answer questions. Please feel free to answer these questions in as much detail as you see fit. Listed on the next page is a list of terms and their definitions that will be used throughout this survey. **(STATEMENT ON HOW TO TURN THE SURVEY IN.)**

<sup>1</sup>Haynie, D. L., Farhat, T., Brooks-Russell, A., Wang, J., Barbieri, B. & Iannotti, R. J. (2013). Dating violence perpetration and victimization among U.S. adolescents: Prevalence, patterns and associations with health complaints and substance abuse. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 53(2), 194-201.

<sup>2</sup>Davis, Antoinette, MPH. (2008.) Interpersonal and Physical Dating Violence among Teens. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus. Available at [http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2008\\_focus\\_teen\\_dating\\_violence.pdf](http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2008_focus_teen_dating_violence.pdf).

<sup>3</sup>Vagi, K. J., O'Malley Olson, E., Basile, K. C., & Vivolo-Kantor, (2015). Teen dating violence (physical and sexual) among US high school students: Findings from the 2013 national youth risk behavior survey. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 169(5), 474-482

<sup>4</sup> Liz Claiborne Inc., (2005). conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited.

<sup>5</sup> S.L. Feld & M.A. Strauss, (1989). *Criminology*, 27, 141-161.





**Multiple-Choice Questions**

Please respond, on a scale of 1-5, whether you strongly disagree (1), somewhat disagree (2), do not know (3), somewhat agree (4), or strongly agree (5) with the following statements. For each statement, circle only one number per row that corresponds with your level of agreement or disagreement.

Statement	(1) Strongly Disagree	(2) Somewhat Disagree	(3) Do Not Know	(4) Somewhat Agree	(5) Somewhat Agree
1. I feel teen dating violence is a concern young people face.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I recognize a need to address teen dating violence at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I can identify the warning signs of a potentially unhealthy or abusive relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am aware of resources to prevent and respond to teen dating violence such as evidence-based curriculum, prevention programming, PFA orders, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am familiar with the domestic violence services in my area and am comfortable referring students who experience dating violence, sexual violence, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel students at my school understand and know how to respond to teen dating violence and sexual violence.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My school understands that the Title IX law includes K-12 institutions as well as higher education and actively works to adhere to all statutes and regulations of the law.	1	2	3	4	5
Statement	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)



	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Do Not Know	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Agree
8. My school has sufficient policies and procedures in place to prevent and respond to incidents of teen dating violence and sexual violence and I feel adequately prepared to implement and enforce them.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My school feels prepared to respond to incidents of dating violence and sexual assault. This includes responding to and making reasonable accommodations to the victim, the perpetrator, and the parents or guardians involved.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am confident in my ability to train administrators, faculty, and staff to prevent, identify, and respond to teen dating violence.	1	2	3	4	5



Jana's Campaign is a national education and gender violence prevention organization with the mission of reducing gender and relationship violence. With offices in Kansas and Colorado, Jana's Campaign works to implement its five program areas: public awareness and community action; education, prevention, and intervention; public policy advocacy; campus action initiative; and engaging men and boys. Jana's Campaign was created in honor of the late Jana Mackey and all victims of domestic violence. Jana was a 25 year-old University of Kansas law student who was killed by her ex-boyfriend in 2008. To learn more about Jana's Campaign, see [www.janascampaign.org](http://www.janascampaign.org).



Thank you again for taking the time to participating in this survey. **(STATEMENT ON HOW TO TURN IN THE SURVEY)** If you would like to learn more about dating and gender violence or would be interested in potentially being involved or using some of the programming that might be created as a result of this survey, please fill out the contact information sheet provided below and return it to the survey administrator/conference representative or send an email with the same information to [janascampaign@gmail.com](mailto:janascampaign@gmail.com).

**Contact Information**

*(Only complete and return if interested in receiving more information from Jana's Campaign.)*

Remove this sheet from the rest of the survey and return it to the survey administrator/conference representative.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Dating Violence

## What is dating violence?

-Dating violence is when one partner abuses the other in a dating relationship.

## What is abuse?

-Abuse is any words or actions that are meant to control or hurt another person.

## The types of abuse are:

**1. Emotional abuse:** This includes name calling, put downs, criticism, threats of harm, intimidation, physical and social isolation, jealousy and possessiveness, deprivation, ignoring, dismissing needs, false accusations, blaming, destroying trust lying and breaking promises.

**2. Physical abuse:** This includes pushing, shoving, slapping, punching, kicking, choking, assault with a weapon, holding or tying down, restraining, leaving in a dangerous place, refusing to help when sick or injured.

**3. Sexual abuse:** This includes criticizing body and calling by sexually degrading names, performing sexual acts against their will, coercing into sex, having sex when in an inebriated state (i.e. on drugs or alcohol, hurting them during sex or assaulting genitals).

## What are the effects of dating violence?

1. Physical injuries, such as bruises and broken bones.
2. Emotional problems, like low self-esteem and depression.
3. Death.

## What should I do if I am being abused?

1. Believe in yourself.
2. If you have been physically assaulted, get medical help.
3. If you think that you are in danger, seek shelter and call the police.
4. Talk to someone you trust about what you are feeling inside. This could be a friend, family member, crisis hotline, school counselor, or member of the clergy.

## What should I do if I know someone who is being abused?

1. BELIEVE THEM! Support and listen to them.
2. Encourage them to get out of the relationship and get the help they need.

**Call the YWCA Women's Crisis Center/Safehouse  
1-316-267-SAFE (7233)**

# SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS

973-2260

E-mail: [safe&drugfree@usd259.net](mailto:safe&drugfree@usd259.net)

Web site: [www.usd259.com/safeschools](http://www.usd259.com/safeschools)

April 2003

## SDFS Fact Sheet #8: Relationship Violence

Nearly one in 10 high school students will experience physical violence from someone they're going with. People often commit violence as a way to release feelings of anger, control others, and/or retaliate against those who have hurt them or someone they care about. There is no single cause of violence as well as no one simple solution. However, violence is a learned behavior and can be changed. Share this information with the young people you know. It is also applicable to adult relationships.

### Types of Violence in Teen Dating Relationships:

- ◆ Verbal Abuse - behaviors that cause harm with words, including name-calling, insults, and yelling.
- ◆ Psychological Abuse - behaviors that cause emotional distress, including threats, intimidation, jealousy, possessiveness, destroying gifts, clothing, letters, damaging a car or home.
- ◆ Physical Abuse - behaviors that inflict harm on a person, including slapping, hitting, shoving, grabbing, hair pulling, biting, and throwing objects at a person.
- ◆ Sexual Violence - advances that make a person feel uncomfortable, ranging from coercion to date rape.
- ◆ Abuse of Male Privilege - behaviors that assume that boys have more power than girls and that boys have special privileges in relationships with girls. The guy makes all of the decisions for the couple, expects his girlfriend to wait on and pamper him, and treats her as property of his own.

### Signs of Dating Violence: Are you going out with someone who...

- Is jealous and possessive, won't let you have friends, checks on you, won't accept breaking up?
- Tries to control you by being bossy, giving orders, making all decisions, not taking your opinions seriously?
- Puts you down in front of friends, tells you that you would be nothing without him or her?
- Scares you? Makes you worry about reactions to things you say or do? Threatens you? Uses or owns weapons?
- Is violent? Has a history of fighting, loses temper quickly, brags about mistreating others? Grabs, pushes, shoves or hits you?
- Pressures you for sex or is forceful or scary about sex? Gets too serious about the relationship too fast?
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs and pressures you to take them?
- Has a history of failed relationships? And blames the other person for all the problems?
- Makes your family and friends uneasy and concerned for your safety?



There are lots of reasons why breaking free can be hard. From a very early age, we get the idea that having a romantic relationship is the most important thing in the world and is worth any sacrifice. Also, going out with someone can be a status symbol, a way to feel more secure, or a way to break into a new circle of friends. Some people just don't like to be alone. They may feel that any relationship is better than no relationship. Teens have the right to be treated with respect and to not be harmed physically or emotionally by another person. Violence and abuse are not acceptable in *any* relationship.

#### **What to do if you want out of an abusive relationship?**

- ◆ Tell your parents, a friend, a counselor, a clergyman, or someone else whom you trust and can help. The more isolated you are from friends and family, the more control the abuser has over you.
- ◆ Alert a school counselor, school law enforcement officer, principal or other trusted school staff member.
- ◆ Keep a daily log of the abuse.
- ◆ Do not meet your partner alone. Do not let him or her in your car when you are alone.
- ◆ Avoid being alone at school, your job, on the way to and from places.
- ◆ Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.
- ◆ Plan and rehearse what you would do if your partner became abusive.

#### **What can you do to help a friend who is in a violent relationship?**

- ◆ If you're worried, say something. If you're concerned about your friend's safety, mention it. People who are being hurt in a relationship often feel they can't talk to anyone. They may be ashamed. They may think the abuse is their fault. They may think they deserve it. Let your friend know that you're there, you're willing to listen, and you're not going to judge.
- ◆ Listen, support, believe. If a friend asks for your help, take your friend seriously. Believe what your friend tells you, not the gossip you might hear in the hallway. Your friend is trusting you with very personal and painful information—be a true friend and don't spread gossip. Support your friend by making it clear that your friend doesn't deserve to be abused in any way. Recognize that, as abusive as the person your friend is going out with might be, your friend might find it difficult to leave the relationship, particularly if your friend believe it will make the violence worse.
- ◆ Call in reinforcements. Your friend might tell you about a violent relationship only if you promise to keep it a secret. Don't keep the secret. Tell someone and get help.

#### **Abusers need help, too.**

- ◆ If you witness an assault, call the police. In many cases, the abuser can be required to get counseling.
- ◆ Do not reinforce abusive behavior by laughing, minimizing, or ignoring an act of violence or a threat.
- ◆ Tell the abuser that violent behavior is not O.K. (Remember, the person has a problem and needs help.)

**SOURCES:** American Psychological Association—Love Doesn't Have to Hurt Teens ([www.apa.org/pi/pii/teen/teen6.html](http://www.apa.org/pi/pii/teen/teen6.html));

American Psychological Association Help Center—Warning Signs of Teen Violence: Reasons for Violence

([helping.apa.org/warningsigns/reasons.html](http://helping.apa.org/warningsigns/reasons.html)); Teen Dating Violence ([www.ci.boulder.co.us/police/prevention/teen\\_dating.htm](http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/police/prevention/teen_dating.htm));

Safe Place: Helping Abuse Victims and Abusers ([www.austinsafeplace.org/programs/school/abusehelp.htm](http://www.austinsafeplace.org/programs/school/abusehelp.htm)).



## Warning Signs

### ***Warning signs of someone being abused:***

- » Depression or loss of confidence
- » Loss of interest in activities and hobbies
- » Noticeable changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- » Worrying about making a dating partner angry or jealous
- » Excuses the dating partner's bad behavior
- » Isolation from family and friends
- » Spending too much time with a dating partner
- » Suspicious bruises or injuries
- » Alcohol or drug use

### ***Warning signs of an abuser:***

- » Insults made to a dating partner in public or private
- » Controlling behaviors (controlling how a dating partner dresses or acts, who he/she spends time with, checking in constantly)
- » Personal history of aggression, bullying, or having trouble controlling anger
- » Threats to hurt self or others
- » Damaging a dating partner's personal belongings
- » Extreme jealousy

For more information about Choose Respect, go to [www.chooserespect.org](http://www.chooserespect.org).



## **BEHAVIOR OF SOMEONE BEING ABUSED**

- You try to read your partner's mind
- Frequently try to guess his/her feelings
- Use drugs or alcohol more when around him/her
- Evaluate your activities/friends according to his response
- Give up things you enjoy to please your partner
- Worry about your achievements and how he will react
- Begin to adopt his/her values, give up your values
- Speak and act cautiously to avoid partner's disapproval
- Allow him/her to make important decisions
- Hide things you are doing or want to do
- Give up friendships
- Not wanting your friends or family around your partner
- Restrain from sharing your opinions about things
- Fear your partner, afraid of what he/she might do

## Dating Abuse Risk Factors and Warning Signs

- The risks of dating violence increase for kids who
  - believe it's OK to use threats or violence to get their way or solve problems,
  - use alcohol or drugs,
  - lack the ability to manage anger or frustration,
  - lack social skills,
  - socialize with violent peers,
  - have learning difficulties and other problems at school,
  - lack parental oversight and support,
  - witness abuse between parents at home, and/or
  - have a history of aggressive behavior or bullying.
- Kids who live in violent communities may see violence as acceptable dating behavior.
- Low self esteem and depression increase the odds of getting involved in an abusive relationship.
- Warning signs that someone is being abused:
  - Isolation from family and friends.
  - Suspicious bruises or injuries.
  - Loss of interest in activities and hobbies.
  - Excuses for the dating partner's behavior.
  - Noticeable changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
  - Drug or alcohol use.
  - Loss of confidence.
- Warning signs that someone may be an abuser:
  - Threatening to hurt others.
  - Insulting a dating partner in public or private.
  - Constantly checking up on the dating partner.
  - Damaging or destroying a dating partner's personal belongings.
  - Attempting to control what the dating partner wears.



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For more information about programming in your area please contact the Rape Prevention and Education Grant Coordinator at 785-296-8476 or visit us on the web at [www.kdhe.state.ks.us/RPE](http://www.kdhe.state.ks.us/RPE).






## Teen Dating Violence Occurs Different Ways

<b>1</b> <b>Physical</b> Pinching, hitting, shoving, or kicking.	<b>2</b> <b>Emotional</b> Threatening, name calling, or harming a partner's self-worth.	<b>3</b> <b>Sexual</b> Forcing a partner in a sex act when he or she does not or cannot consent.	<b>4</b> <b>Stalking</b> Pattern of unwanted harassing or threatening tactics that cause fear.
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Adolescence is ideal for promoting healthy relationships and preventing patterns of dating violence that can last into adulthood.

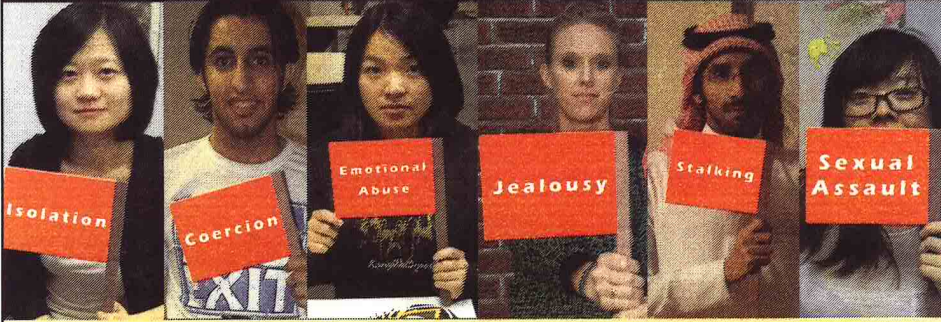


VetoViolence

## Red Flags

When you see a **RED FLAG** for dating violence, say something.

**THE RED FLAG CAMPAIGN**



Isolation  
Coercion  
Emotional Abuse  
Jealousy  
Stalking  
Sexual Assault



# Dating Violence Impacts School Climate

Young people are at enormous risk for interpersonal violence. Nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner each year.<sup>i</sup> Four of every five 13- to 14-year-olds are personally concerned about sexual violence or other physical violence in relationships<sup>ii</sup> and one in three teens know a peer who has been physically hurt by a dating partner.<sup>iii</sup> Approximately 26% of teen-age girls in grades 9 through 12 in the general population have been the victim of physical abuse, sexual abuse or date rape.<sup>iv</sup> The onset of violent behavior often occurs between the ages of 12 and 18,<sup>v</sup> with the first episode of dating violence typically occurring by age 15.<sup>vi</sup>

A teen's experience of dating violence impacts not only that teen, but the teen's family and community. For example, dating violence has a particularly damaging effect on the safety and security of schools and young people while at school. In a study about dating violence in teens ages 13 through 18, 42% of boys and 43% of girls that reported abuse said that the incidents of abuse took place either in a school building or on school grounds.<sup>vii</sup> The experience of abuse and victimization may make youth who experience dating violence particularly vulnerable to engaging in delinquent or high-risk activities. Teen victims of violence report higher rates of truancy, more negative contact with their teachers, and increased conflict with other students.<sup>viii</sup> They are also substantially more likely than classmates to bring guns or other weapons to school, and three times as likely to be involved in a physical fight.<sup>ix</sup> This threatens the safety not only of teen victims of dating violence and sexual violence, but of every student and staff member in the school. Despite this relationship, school resources are often focused on other safety considerations, such as gang violence and bullying. Given the prevalence and impact of dating violence and sexual violence, schools cannot afford to ignore or merely react to this safety concern.

While studies have shown that nearly a quarter of teens say they would confide in a coach, teacher or school counselor if they were in abusive relationship, only a handful of school districts have taken proactive steps to address teen dating violence.

## What is the Purpose of this Policy?

The overarching goals of the School Policy Kit are to:

- Improve school climate and enhance the learning environment.
- Prepare schools to meet standards of school safety and legal liability.
- Protect the right of every student to enjoy a safe and meaningful education.

The purpose of implementing a comprehensive policy is to facilitate a systemic school response to dating violence, sexual violence, stalking, and harassment among students. In particular, having a policy in place ensures that students who are experiencing dating violence are able to access the resources they need to continue to enjoy a safe and meaningful education, but it also protects the right of every student to a safe school environment.

A comprehensive policy should address incidents of dating violence that occur on school grounds, but also the needs of students experiencing abuse that occurs off school grounds or at the hands of non-students. These off campus incidents often have an indirect impact on the victim and the general school population during school time. Research suggests that teens who are victims of dating violence experience higher rates of truancy and increased conflict with other students. They are also more likely to engage in a physical fight or bring a weapon to school. A policy that focuses on dating violence is vital to a school's efforts to create a positive learning environment even if there is already a policy that addresses general student violence.

## How to Use the School Policy Kit

Schools and community partners can use this toolkit to guide their school policy project from start to finish. While every resource may not be relevant in every school setting, this toolkit provides an overview of a comprehensive school response to relationship abuse. Before starting, schools should evaluate their current response protocols. It may be helpful to form a working group of concerned parties including but not limited to parents, teachers, administrators, staff, local domestic violence experts and students.

The resources in this toolkit may be:

- Adopted as is by the school district
- Adapted to meet the needs of older or younger student populations
- Incorporated into current school policies as needed to fill gaps
- Used to guide development of a new policy
- Used to update existing policies to meet standards of best practices
- Used by community-based organizations to educate policymakers on school policy needs when drafting legislation

## About the Creators of the School Policy Kit

Founded in 1996, Break the Cycle is a national nonprofit organization that engages, educates and empowers youth to build lives free from domestic and dating violence. Break the Cycle provides preventive education, free legal services, advocacy and support to young people between the ages of 12 and 24 and trains social service agencies, law enforcement, school personnel and others to more effectively respond to young victims of teen dating violence. As the leading voice for teens on the issue of dating violence, Break the Cycle advocates for policy and legislative changes at the state and federal levels to better protect the rights and promote the health of teens across the country.





<sup>i</sup> Black, MC, et al. "Physical Dating Violence Among High School Students – United States, 2003." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report for the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention* 55.9 (2006).

<sup>ii</sup> Davis, Julia, Liberty Greene, and Tina Hoff. "National Survey of Adolescents and Young Adults: Sexual Health Knowledge, Attitudes Experiences." The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation 2003.

<sup>iii</sup> "Teen Research Unlimited." February 2005.

<sup>iv</sup> Collins, Karen Scott, Karen Davis, Cathy Schoen, et al. "The Commonwealth Fund Survey for the Health of Adolescent Girls." The Commonwealth Fund November 1997.

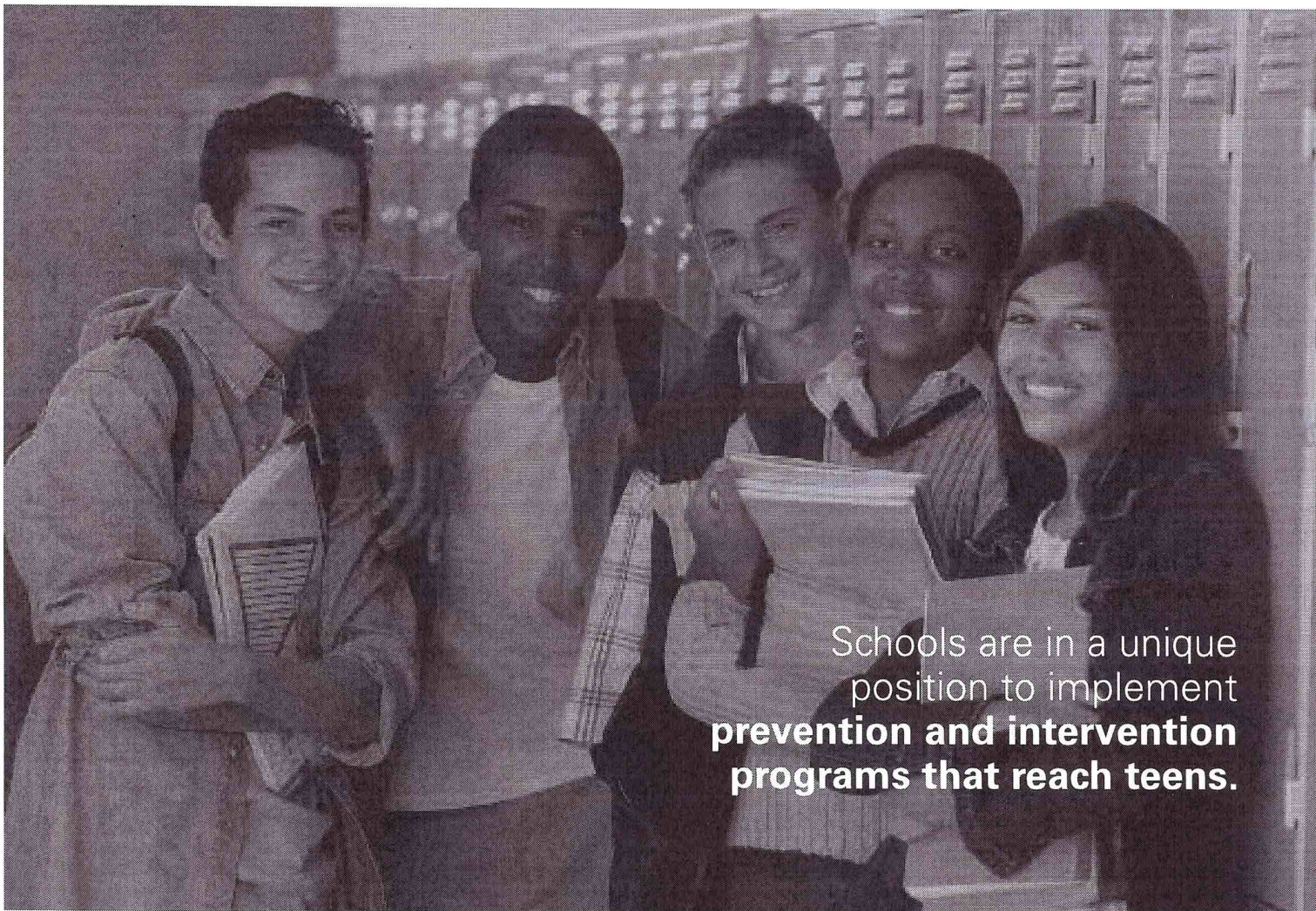
<sup>v</sup> Rosado, Lourdes. "The Pathways to Youth Violence: How Child Maltreatment and Other Risk Factors Lead Children to Chronically Aggressive Behavior." *Understanding Adolescents: A Juvenile Court Training Curriculum* by the American Bar Association Juvenile Justice Center 2000.

<sup>vi</sup> Arriaga, Ximena B. and Nicole M. Capezza. "Targets of Partner Violence: The Importance of Understanding Coping Trajectories." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 20.1 (2005): 89-99.

<sup>vii</sup> National Research Center for Women and Families. November 2004. American Youth Work Center. September 2008 [[www.center4research.org/v-dating.html](http://www.center4research.org/v-dating.html)].

<sup>viii</sup> Nunez, Michell and Madeline Wordes. "Our Vulnerable Teenagers: Their Victimization, Its Consequences, and Directions for Prevention and Intervention." National Council on Crime and Delinquency and National Center for Victims of Crime May 2002.

<sup>ix</sup> Drafted on behalf of the California Attorney General's Office. "A Preventable Epidemic: Teen Dating Violence and its Impact on School Safety and Academic Achievement." Tenth Biennial California Student Survey 2003-04.



Schools are in a unique position to implement **prevention and intervention programs that reach teens.**



# GETTING STARTED

Before you embark on your school policy project, schools and community partners must ask themselves the essential questions listed below. Use the worksheet below to help direct your planning with your school policy team or working group.

Measures	Key Considerations	Action/Next Step	Person(s) Responsible	Complete by Date
<b>Internal Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much staff time can your organization devote to this project?</li> <li>• Can you dedicate any financial resources?</li> </ul>			
<b>External Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will you ask your partner organizations or schools to contribute human or financial resources?</li> <li>• What funding sources are available for the project?</li> <li>• Can you approach community-based organizations to partner with you on a grant application?</li> <li>• If you are a community-based organization, can you partner with your local school?</li> <li>• What resources or tools already exist that you can draw from to minimize duplicative work?</li> </ul>			
<b>Targeted System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will you attempt to implement this project at the district level or begin with one school?</li> <li>• Do you plan to work with only high schools or both high schools and middle schools?</li> <li>• How will you need to adapt your policy for middle schools?</li> <li>• Will you need to create different or additional resources for the middle school?</li> <li>• Is your local school already engaged in prevention education and other programs addressing relationship abuse?</li> <li>• Is your local school ready and willing to adopt a relationship abuse policy?</li> </ul>			
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are a community-based organization, do you have a good relationship with your local school district?</li> <li>• Do you have contacts at the district level?</li> <li>• What can do you do to begin cultivating those relationships now?</li> <li>• Does your organization or school have the right expertise to develop and implement a school policy?</li> <li>• If not, who will you partner with?</li> <li>• How can you develop those contacts?</li> </ul>			
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy after it is implemented?</li> <li>• Will you hire a professional evaluator or conduct the evaluation yourself?</li> </ul>			



# Legal Duty of Schools Memo: Relevant Federal and State Laws

A discussion of the key federal and state laws that schools must be aware of when developing and implementing a dating violence policy.

## Federal Law

### Duties and Requirements under Title IX

#### A. *Right to be free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment*

Schools that receive federal funds can be liable under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 for failing to adequately respond to abusive behavior against students. Title IX guarantees that “[n]o person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”<sup>1</sup> Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Such harassment consists of unwelcome sexual conduct including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.<sup>2</sup> Sexual violence is an extreme form of sexual harassment. Adolescent dating abuse can be a form of sexual harassment because it often involves unwelcome touching, sexual demands, verbal abuse, and physical coercion of a sexual nature.

#### B. *School liability for adolescent dating abuse*

School districts are liable for student-on-student sexual harassment, and accordingly acts of adolescent dating abuse that constitute sexual harassment, when (1) a student has been sexually harassed; (2) the school has actual knowledge of the harassment; (3) the harassment was severe, pervasive and objectively offensive; (4) the harassment caused the student to be deprived of access to educational opportunities or benefits; and (5) the school is deliberately indifferent to the harassment.<sup>3</sup>

Deliberate indifference is found in two circumstances. First, a school district that fails to affirmatively act to protect students can be found to be deliberately indifferent.<sup>4</sup> Second, a school district that knows or reasonably should know that its actions to protect students are ineffective or inadequate can be found to be deliberately indifferent.<sup>5</sup>

#### C. *Required school district policies and protocols*

Title IX regulations require that each educational institution has a written policy and protocol for responding to sexual harassment.<sup>6</sup> Failure to adopt and implement policies on sexual harassment and adolescent dating abuse that qualifies as sexual harassment exposes school districts to civil liability under Title IX.

1 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a) (2007).

2 5 C.C.R. § 4916(a) (2007).

3 *Davis v. Monroe County Bd of Ed.*, 526 U.S. 629, 651 (1999) (The United States Supreme Court has held that a student who is subjected to sexual harassment by another student can sue a school district to recover monetary damages arising from the district's failure to respond to student-on-student sexual harassment.)

4 *Doe v. Petaluma City Sch. Dist.*, 949 F. Supp. 1415, 1426 (N.D. Cal. 1996).

5 *Monteiro v. Tempe Union High Sch. Dist.*, 158 F.3d 1022, 1034 (9th Cir. 1998); See 34 C.F.R. § 106.31(b) (2007); Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (January 2001) at 12; *Vance v. Spencer County Public Sch. Dist.*, 231 F.3d 253, 261 (6th Cir. 2000).

6 See 34 C.F.R. § 106.31 (2007).

### Duty to Provide Equal Protection of the Laws.

The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment mandates that no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of the laws, “which is essentially a direction that all persons similarly situated should be treated alike.”<sup>7</sup> Federal courts have held that a school district’s deliberate indifference to peer sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, can constitute evidence that the district violated a student’s constitutional rights under the Equal Protection Clause.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, failing to respond to adolescent dating abuse that qualifies as sexual harassment exposes school districts and their officials to civil liability under the Equal Protection Clause.<sup>9</sup>

### Duty to Train Employees on Sexual Harassment Policies

School districts can be liable for failing to train employees on sexual harassment, and accordingly acts of adolescent dating abuse that constitute sexual harassment. Federal courts have held that school districts have a legal duty to train employees, when (1) the need for training is obvious and (2) it is highly foreseeable that a student’s constitutional rights will be violated if the district fails to conduct such training.<sup>10</sup>

### Duty to Promote School Safety

School districts that receive funds under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act, must have a plan that promotes school safety.<sup>11</sup> Because abusive behavior poses serious safety concerns, school safety plans should include abusive behavior.

### Duty to Track Adolescent Dating Abuse

In addition, school districts that receive Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Act funds must track incidents of violence and crime on campus which includes tracking incidences of abusive behavior that occur on campus. Each state must forward this information to the United States Department of Education on an annual basis.<sup>12</sup>

### Unsafe School Choice Option

The Unsafe School Choice Option of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires that each state that receives federal funding offers to the parents of each student who attends a “persistently dangerous” public school, or “who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense” while on school grounds the option to attend a safe public school.<sup>13</sup> This requirement permits victims to transfer to another school after experiencing an on-campus violent or threatening incident of adolescent dating abuse or sexual violence.

7 City of Cleburne v. Cleburne Living Ctr., 473 U.S. 432, 439 (1985) (internal quotations and citations omitted).

8 Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified Sch. Dist., 324 F.3d 1130, 1135 (9th Cir. 2003).

9 Annamaria M. v. Napa Valley Unified Sch. Dist., 2006 WL 1525733 (N.D. Cal. 2006)(citing Flores, 324 F.3d at 1135).

10 Plumeau v. School Dist. No. 40, 130 F.3d 432, 439 n.4 (9th Cir. 1997); Flores, 324 F.3d at 1136.

11 20 U.S.C. § 7161(3)(B) (2007).

12 20 U.S.C. §§ 7102, 7132 (2007).

13 20 U.S.C. § 7912 (a) (2007).



## State Law

### Required Dating Violence Policy and Prevention Education

Several states have recently passed laws requiring the implementation of school policies addressing teen dating violence and/or mandating prevention education for students. Many more states have introduced such laws and it is likely that this trend will continue to grow. Each state's law is different, so it is important for schools and districts to stay informed of new developments in their state's law.

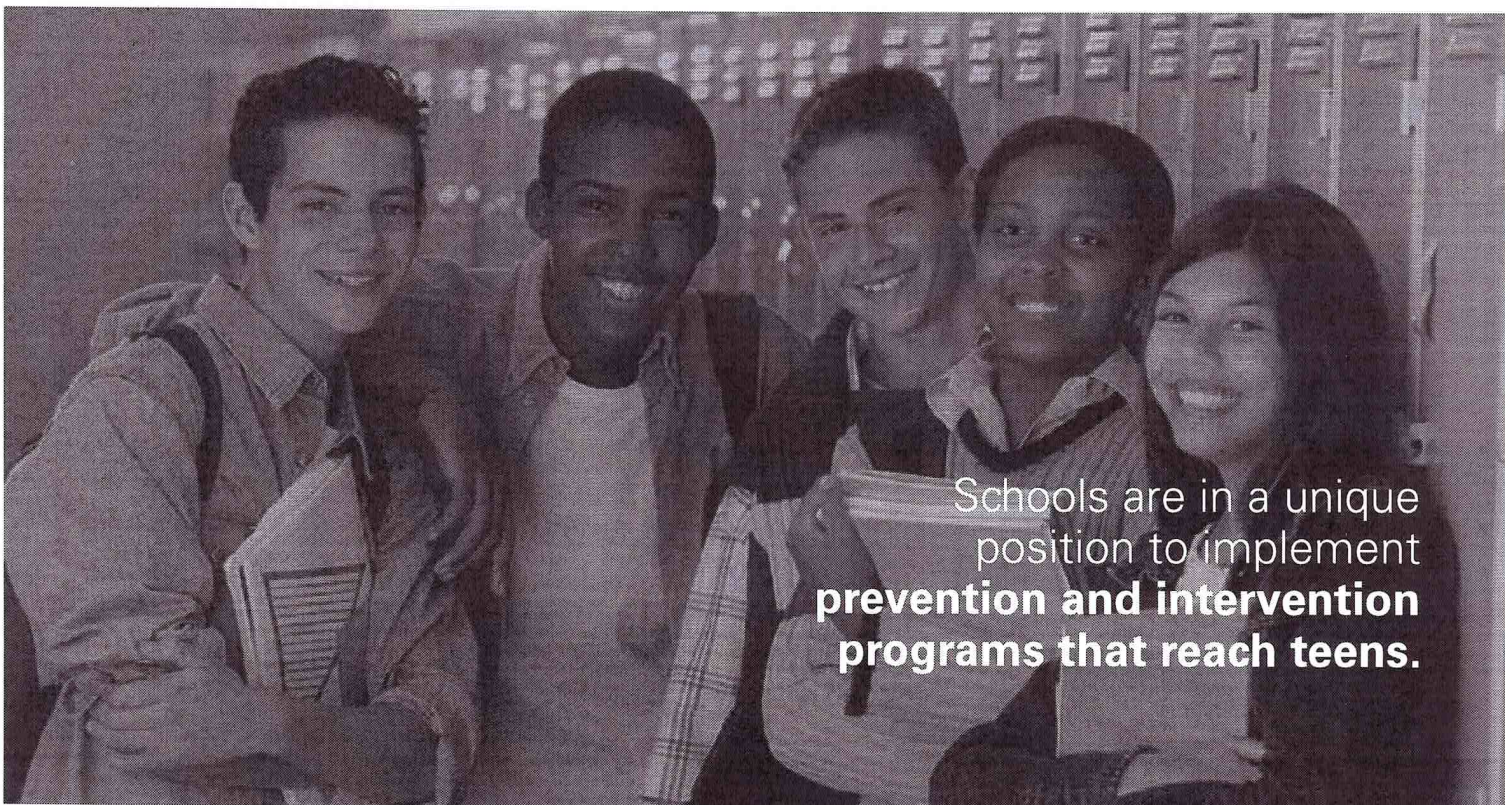
### Mandatory Reporting of Teen Dating Abuse

The federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act requires each state to set its own standards regarding mandatory reporting, including defining child abuse and indentifying mandated reporters. In some states, the definition of child abuse is broad enough to include peer on peer teen dating abuse. It is important for schools to know what requirements their state's mandatory reporting law imposes on school employees at all levels, as well as whether their state's definition of child abuse includes teen dating abuse.

In addition, certain professions impose other codes of confidentiality on their members. For example, mental health professionals, attorneys, or medical professionals may be obligated to follow professional codes of conduct that other school employees are not required to follow. It is important for schools to be aware of what restrictions these codes impose, how they affect other school policies, and how they interact with mandatory reporting duties.

### Other State Laws

There may be additional duties imposed on schools by individual state law. Schools are encouraged to consult an attorney with expertise in education law in order to ensure that they are complying with all state legal mandates.



Schools are in a unique position to implement **prevention and intervention programs that reach teens.**

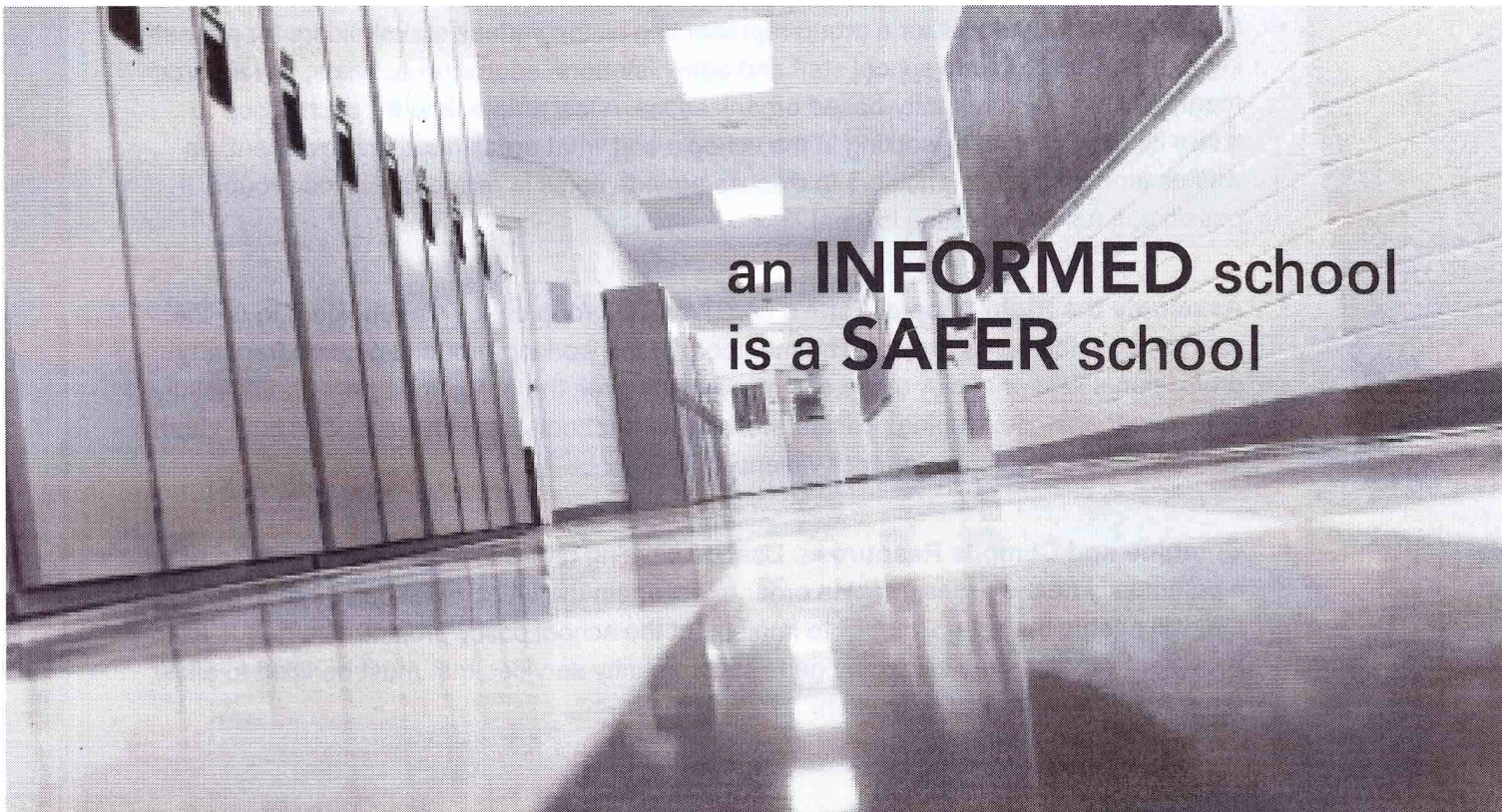


# Tips for Success

- **Be Informed.** Educate yourself on your local political landscape. Learn how local school districts, city and county governments, administrative agencies, and community groups interact. Get to know the key politicians, administrators, and activists that are engaged in education, youth development, and intimate partner violence issues.
- **Build Partnerships.** Develop a strong relationship with your local school district. Set up meetings with principals, teachers, school resource officers, counselors, and administrators. Talk to each group about their priorities and goals. If you already work in the schools, let each group know what you do (don't assume that administrators know what's happening in individual classrooms, or vice versa) and how you'd like to build on your existing programs.
- **Do the Legwork.** Start your outreach to the school district early in your policy project. Learn the art of marketing and selling your policy ideas in order to gain the support of your community stakeholders. Every stakeholder has a different set of priorities and will be won over with a different argument. Develop a variety of approaches, backed up by statistics and research, to relate your policy project to the needs of each stakeholder.
- **Connect the Dots.** Translate intimate partner violence research and policy into educator-friendly language. Highlight how your project will contribute to the district's work to address truancy, academic performance, dropout rates, school violence, or another area where the district is focusing its attention.
- **Collaborate.** Bring together a group representing all the various stakeholders for a meeting of the minds. Include school staff and administrators, education activists, law enforcement, youth, and community-based organizations. Allow ample time for each group to share its view of what is working in the schools and what areas need improvement, as well as time for the stakeholders to discuss agenda items in mixed-discipline groups. If possible, a full-day meeting is ideal.
- **Assemble the Right People.** Form a core working group of key stakeholders to do the main work of the policy project. The members of the working group can come from any professional field or sector of the community; however, the group members should jointly have experience developing policies, working with schools, and knowledge of both youth development and intimate partner violence.
- **Combine and Compile Resources.** Use the working group to draft develop and conduct a community needs assessment in order to ascertain the types of resources and tools that will enable the school district to implement the school policy project. The needs assessment will also help to identify gaps in community services that must be filled to allow the school policy project to flourish.



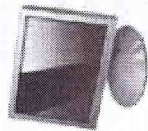
- **Think Broadly.** Using the results of the community needs assessment, do any necessary follow-up research and begin drafting your school policy. Use the working group to draft the policy, solicit feedback from various community stakeholders, and develop other essential materials, such as outreach materials, training curricula, or supplemental policies.
- **Get Feedback and Buy-in.** Collaboration and cooperation are vital to a successful policy project. Get your school district's input during the policy development. Consider having representatives from the district on the working group. If this is not feasible, keep district administrators up to date on the working group progress and goals. Solicit feedback on the policy from all levels of school staff.
- **Make it Useful.** Don't recreate the wheel. If your district has existing policies that can be adapted, expanded, or supplemented to adequately address dating violence, use them! Ensure that the policies your working group is creating can easily integrate into the district's existing policy framework.
- **Engage Students.** Incorporate feedback from students into your policy. A good school policy is student-driven. Conduct focus groups or surveys to learn what students are thinking about their school's existing response to dating violence, how the school should be responding, and the user-friendliness of your policy. Get student feedback at every stage of the policy drafting, implementation, and evaluation process.
- **Be Patient.** Policy changes and implementation takes time and staff resources. Ensure that you and your partner organizations have sufficient resources – financial, staff, and time – to provide the school district with the necessary support to successfully implement your policy and do any necessary follow-up.





# Policy Scorecard

A tool to help school administrators and community partners judge their schools' progress toward a comprehensive school response to dating violence.



*How to use this tool: Place your score in the provided boxes for each question. A "3" means the policies listed are in place. Total your points to and review using our guide to learn what your score means.*

*This PDF is interactive! If you have Adobe Acrobat you can use the Forms feature to complete this document on your computer.*

## GOAL

1

**The District and all school employees promote mutual respect, healthy communication, and acceptance among students, staff, and the school community.**

- Regular communication and activities engage students, staff, parents, and school community.
- School environment is welcoming and encourages a positive school identity and culture.
- The school respects the diversity amongst staff, students, and their families as contributing to a school culture of connectedness.
- Administrators discuss with staff all aspects of the healthy relationships policy.
- School employees respond quickly to incidents of derogatory or discriminatory language among students.

2

**The District provides training opportunities for all school employees and encourages employees to increase their knowledge of and ability to respond to dating violence among students.**

- At least one employee per school holds the role of School-based Advocate and receives specialized annual training.
- Targeted, annual trainings are mandated for administrators, teachers, behavioral health professionals, coaches, and school safety officers.
- The district partners with community-based organizations to provide annual trainings to school employees.
- The district allows community-based organizations to publicize additional training opportunities and provides space for trainings.

**Break** the Cycle

Empowering Youth to End Domestic Violence

ABSENT 0 points

UNDER DEVELOPMENT 1 point

PARTIALLY IN PLACE 2 points

FULLY IN PLACE 3 points



**GOAL**

ABSENT 0 points      UNDER DEVELOPMENT 1 point      PARTIALLY IN PLACE 2 points      FULLY IN PLACE 3 points

**3**

**The district educates students about healthy relationships and the prevention of dating violence.**

- Evidence-based curricula are used in health or life skills classes in conjunction with related topics.
- The district partners with community-based organizations to offer additional education programs for students, both during the school day and after.
- Teachers take advantage of opportunities to incorporate prevention education and healthy relationship lessons into all lessons.

**4**

**The district engages parents and caregivers in their prevention efforts and provides educational programming targeted to those groups.**

- The names of all School-based Advocates are sent to parents and caregivers at the beginning of each school year.
- School-based Advocates are available to speak to parents at school open houses and events.
- The district educational workshops for parents at least once per school year on topics related to dating violence.
- District administrators work closely with parents' organizations to keep parents informed of the school's prevention work.

**5**

**The district and all school employees respond quickly and appropriately to early warning signs of dating violence.**

- School employees receive training on early warning signs of adolescent dating abuse, bullying, sexual harassment, and other abusive or violent behavior.
- The district notifies all school employees of the protocol for responding to early warning signs.
- School employees utilize a variety of intervention methods tailored to the needs of individual students.
- School-based Advocates are knowledgeable about community resources and refer students to community-based organizations when appropriate.
- School-based Advocates and administrators communicate regularly about early interventions that occur on campus and the need for future interventions.

## GOAL

ABSENT  
0 points

UNDER  
DEVELOPMENT  
1 point

PARTIALLY  
IN PLACE  
2 points

FULLY  
IN PLACE  
3 points

# 6

### The district and all school employees respond quickly and appropriately to serious incidents of dating violence on campus.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- The district has established a protocol for responding to serious incidents of dating violence on campus, including documentation of incidents, intervention during incidents, investigation of incidents, and referrals to law enforcement.
- The district has a well-publicized student complaint procedure that includes age-appropriate forms and assistance filling out forms.
- School employees receive training on intervening in incidents of dating violence and working with alleged victims and perpetrators.
- The district has a policy on bystanders, including disciplinary consequences.

# 7

### The district and all school employees provide accessible resources for students who are victims of dating violence.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- The district has a well-publicized protocol for accepting and ruling on requests for accommodation.
- The district works with students holding civil protection orders to enforce their orders on school grounds.
- Victims of dating violence are guaranteed rights in any disciplinary hearing against their perpetrator.
- School-based Advocates are knowledgeable about community resources and refer students to community-based organizations when appropriate.

# 8

### The district notifies students and parents of the district's healthy relationships policy.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

- The district distributes a copy of the healthy relationships policy to parents and caregivers at the beginning of every school year using methods that will reach the most people.
- The district notifies students, using age-appropriate methods, of the healthy relationships policy at the beginning of every school year.
- The healthy relationships policy is included in all student handbooks or similar publications.
- Information on the policy, including the name(s) of the school's School-based Advocate(s) is posted in every classroom.
- The healthy relationships policy is reviewed regularly, on the same schedule as other disciplinary policies.

**GOAL**

ABSENT 0 points      UNDER DEVELOPMENT 1 point      PARTIALLY IN PLACE 2 points      FULLY IN PLACE 3 points

**9**

**The district produces and distributes a yearly campus safety report.**

- Administrators and School-based Advocates track the number and type of incidents of dating violence on campus.
- Administrators and School-based Advocates track the number and type of student complaints and requests for accommodation.
- Administrators and School-based Advocates track the district's school employee trainings and student prevention education programs.
- Administrators and School-based Advocates compile the above information into an annual report and release the report to the community using the district's usual methods for communicating with the school community.

**10**

**The district partners with local community organizations to provide a comprehensive response to dating violence among students.**

- School-based Advocates maintain a current list of local community-based organizations that specialize in adolescent dating abuse, bullying, sexual harassment, and other abusive or violent behavior.
- The district utilizes community-based organizations for school employee trainings, student prevention programs, and referrals.
- Community-based organizations are included in the district's efforts to create a comprehensive response to dating violence among students.





FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE,  
TRAINING OR GUIDANCE,  
VISIT:

**Break**

**the Cycle**

**Empowering Youth to End  
Domestic Violence**

**WWW.BREAKTHECYCLE.ORG**

## ✦ FINAL SCORES

### 0-10

Completing this scorecard is a great first step to help you identify your school's needs. There are lots of ways for your team to get started. Consider assembling a working group of key stakeholders to begin creating a plan for building your school policy. Start with a community needs assessment and an analysis of your existing resources. Be sure to identify your strengths and weaknesses. The "Getting Started" tool is a great place to begin to build a work plan. Based on the unique needs of your community, choose one area to focus on first and get started. For example, you may want to begin by appointing School-based Advocates and training all school employees on the fundamentals of dating violence and the school's role in prevention and intervention. Community-based organizations can be a great resource for training and other tools you'll need to build policies that meet the needs of your school and community.

### 11-20

You've got a solid start, but there is still work to be done. Bring your core working group back together to identify gaps in your school's response to dating violence. Start with your policy scorecard – any goal that scored less than a 3 is an opportunity to improve. Do all school employees receive basic training on the dynamics of dating violence? Consider working with your community partners to offer in-depth, targeted trainings to teachers, mental health professionals, and school safety officers. Does your dating violence policy have a protocol for responding to serious incidents of dating violence? Consider adding a protocol for responding to early warning signs, in order to prevent more serious incidents from occurring. Choose one or two goals and create a plan for bringing the score up to 3 by the end of this school year. With every extra point you score, you strengthen the safety net for students who are experiencing dating violence.

### 21-30

Great work! You have the right policies and programs in place to ensure that your student can have lives free from dating violence. The next step for you is to make sure that your policies remain effective and up-to-date. Treat your dating violence policy as a living document and review it every year. Record feedback from school employees, students, and parents and use it to make improvements to your policies. Be sure to track incidents of dating violence, requests for accommodation, and staff trainings for your yearly safety report. Use the report to identify problem areas and ask your core working group to develop a plan for addressing those areas. Don't forget to stay in touch with your community partners. The partnerships you create will outlast individual employees, ensuring a comprehensive safety net for future generations of students.



# Policy Checklist



A list of the key elements that every school policy must contain.



### **Definition of Key Terms**

It is important to provide definitions of all key terms for users and administrators of the policy. Good definitions educate students and staff on issues that may be unfamiliar to them, such as dating violence. Clear, concise definitions also allow every member of the school community to have same understanding of the scope, goals, and limitations of the policy.



### **Confidentiality**

Privacy and confidentiality are among the most important factors in a young person's decision to disclose dating violence to an adult. Students' concerns about lack of confidentiality may prevent them from utilizing an otherwise well-conceived policy. The policy should contain a statement that any student information regarding dating violence will be kept confidential to the best of the school's ability. In addition, each school should develop protocols regarding sharing of student information with staff, parents, community-based organizations, law enforcement, and child protective services.



### **Students' Rights and Responsibilities**

The district's policy or student code of conduct should include a statement of students' rights and responsibilities under the district's policies. This statement need not be specific to situations of dating violence, however it should include the rights afforded to both a victim of dating violence and an alleged perpetrator.



### **Statement of Zero Tolerance**

The policy should contain a clear statement that all forms of dating violence – including dating violence, sexual violence, stalking, and harassment – are unacceptable and unwelcome in a positive, supportive learning environment. The statement should also make clear that the school district is committed to providing its students with such an environment through education and policy.



### **Staff Training**

Every member of the school staff should receive a basic training on dating violence annually. Professional staff who provide counseling or mental health services may be required to have additional, in-depth training. The policy should describe the requirements for staff training and the district's plan for ensuring that such training is provided. School districts are urged to partner with community-based organizations that specialize in dating violence to plan trainings for school employees.

✓ **Prevention**

The district should strive to incorporate prevention education into their school curricula and culture. The policy should discuss when to use formal prevention programs, such as Break the Cycle's [Ending Violence] or Hazelden's Safe Dates. Ideally, these curricula are presented during health or life skills classes, along with information on similar topics. The policy should also highlight the need to incorporate prevention messages into the school culture. This can include modeling respectful behavior, using teachable moments, and class projects exploring dating violence topics. The district may also include education for students showing warning signs of being abusive, if appropriate programs exist in the community.

✓ **Intervention**

The policy should include protocols describing the duties of school staff when they witness or are informed of an incident of dating violence. This protocol should include basic steps such as separating the victim and the abuser, assessing immediate safety, informing the victim of his/her rights under the school policy, and documenting the incident. The district may want to include other duties related to the staff member's area of professional expertise or relevant under the district's policy.

✓ **Accommodations**

Students who are victims of dating violence should have the right to ask their school for reasonable accommodation to protect their safety and allow them to continue their education with minimal disruption. The policy should describe the process for requesting an accommodation, the types of accommodation available, and the process for parental involvement, as well as for appealing the denial of a request. The policy should not require the involvement of the alleged perpetrator in an accommodation request.

✓ **Discipline**

The district should ensure that its discipline code is inclusive of dating violence, sexual violence, stalking, and harassment. The discipline code should prohibit each of these behaviors explicitly, as well as prohibit the underlying acts that comprise them. For example, the code may already prohibit threats, assaults, and destruction of property, but it should also state that dating violence is prohibited and is punishable by suspension or expulsion. In addition, the discipline code or school policy should describe the process for filing a complaint against a perpetrator of dating violence, for situations where the abusive incident was not witnessed by a staff member.

✓ **Enforcement of Court Orders**

Schools are key partners in ensuring that civil protection orders are effective in protecting the safety of students experiencing dating violence. The policy should include a statement that the district is committed to assisting students with civil protection orders and the district's protocol for doing so. The district is encouraged to use tools such as an Enforcement Order Worksheet (included in this kit) for cases where the restrained individual is also a student. The policy should urge schools to make changes to the restrained student's school enrollment, participation, or environment first, whenever possible, before considering making such changes with the victim student.





### **Documentation**

Dating violence is often a pattern of behaviors, occurring over a period of time. In some cases, it is only by considering the entire history of a relationship that a pattern of abuse may be seen. It is vital that the policy describe the protocol for documenting incidents of abuse that are witnessed by school staff or reported by students. These files should be kept confidential and treated like other educational records with regard to access by parents or courts.



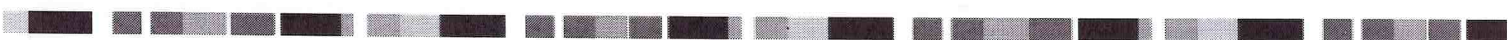
### **Notice of Policy**

Members of the school community, including students, parents, staff, and other interested community members, should receive regular notice of the policy and any changes made. The policy should describe how the district will publicize the policy. Districts are encouraged to utilize a variety of methods in order to reach as many people as possible.



### **Student Outreach**

Students, in particular, should be informed of the existence of the policy, their rights under the policy, and instructions for utilizing the policy. The policy should describe the district's plan for educating students about the policy. Districts are encouraged to create age- and developmentally-appropriate materials, such as posters and palm cards, and to use classroom and school-wide gatherings to educate students about the policy.



# Sample School Policy:

## A Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Dating Violence in XYZ School District

This is a sample school dating violence policy, intended to guide schools in creating their own policy by providing procedures and language.

### Applicability

The purpose of this document is to establish XYZ School District's response to dating violence or sexual violence among students and on the school campus, including policies and procedures to follow when responding to an incident of domestic or dating violence. XYZ School District is committed to providing its students with a positive learning environment that enhances student safety and promotes respect among all students and staff.

This policy applies in any situation where a student's rights and responsibilities are implicated. Student rights and responsibilities may be affected by the actions of other students at the school, including before and after school hours, while traveling in vehicles owned or funded by the school district, and at all school-sponsored or school-related events and activities. Student rights and responsibilities may also be implicated by the actions of non-students or by actions that take place off school grounds. Students who have experienced dating violence or sexual violence have the right to request that the school address their needs according to this policy, regardless of whether the school takes additional disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator, if the alleged perpetrator is a student.

### Applicability

All information concerning a student's status as a victim or perpetrator of dating violence or sexual violence or as the petitioner or respondent of a protection order provided to XYZ School District or its employees shall be retained in the strictest confidence by the District and its employees, except to the extent that disclosure is requested or consented to in writing by the student or is required by applicable federal or state laws.

School employees shall refrain from sharing confidential student information with other school employees, students, or community members, unless disclosure is required by law or school policy or is necessary to protect the student's safety. The right to confidentiality extends to disclosures to a minor student's parent(s), unless disclosure is otherwise required by law or school policy.

### Duty of Schools

Under this policy, each school in XYZ School District, guided by the Principal of the school, shall:

- Educate school employees about teen dating violence, its affect on students, and its relationship to school safety
- Respond quickly and effectively to incidents of dating violence among students
- Work with parent organizations to educate parents and the community about teen dating violence
- Make timely referrals to the School-based Advocates (Advocates) when students disclose incidents of abuse
- Develop relationships with community-based organizations that specialize in domestic and dating violence and refer students to appropriate resources
- Assist in the enforcement of students' civil protection orders
- Notify students and parents of this policy
- Comply with state and federal laws regarding school response to dating violence, particularly Title IX
- Provide dating violence prevention education to all students
- Hold all students and school employees accountable for participating in any form of violence, as perpetrators or bystanders
- Appoint at least one school employee to serve as the Advocate and administer this policy



## School Based Advocates

The Advocates shall provide a specialized response to dating violence and sexual violence on campus and act as a liaison between the school and students who are experiencing dating violence or sexual violence. Advocates are a resource for students on issues of dating violence, as well as the point person for concerns from students' peers and school employees.

The Principal has discretion to choose the most appropriate individual from the field of available school employees. The Advocate positions may be filled by school employees from any field of expertise; however, the Principal shall give priority to school employees with a background in social work, counseling, or mental health.

The role of the Advocate is to:

- Facilitate communication between students and school administrators on issues of dating violence
- Educate students on their rights under this policy
- Receive additional, intensive training on teen dating violence and school response
- Stay informed of the latest developments in the dating violence field and maintain relationships with local organizations that specialize in teen dating violence
- Provide a model for other school employees on how to address dating violence among students and how to effectively work with students experiencing dating violence

## Responding to Incidents of Abuse

All school employees have a duty to respond quickly and effectively when they suspect or become aware of an incident of dating violence or sexual violence. When a student discloses an incident of dating violence or sexual violence to a school employee, or if a school employee witnesses an incident that he/she believes is dating violence or sexual violence, the school employee must take the following actions with the non-offending student or make a timely referral to the appropriate Advocate who shall take the following actions as soon as possible:

- Inform the student of this policy and his/her rights under the policy, including accommodations and complaint process.
- If desired by the student, assist with requests for accommodation or complaint forms.
- Provide the student with a list of local resources, including on- and off-campus services, and refer him/her to appropriate services.
- If desired by the student, create a safety plan that addresses on- and off-campus safety.
- Offer to connect the student with a campus or community-based advocate.
- Assist with enforcement of protection orders as defined by this policy.
- Offer ongoing assistance and advocacy to the student throughout the student's school career.
- With middle school students, the Advocate will, in addition to the above activities:
- Provide the student with age/developmentally appropriate material explaining dating violence and sexual violence, including the school's policy on teen dating violence and sexual violence.
- Promptly involved parent(s) and assist in facilitating communication with student and parent(s), including providing educational materials and resources on dating violence and sexual violence.
- Involve parent(s) in the creation of a safety plan for the student.

If a school employee takes any action with regard to an incident of dating violence or sexual violence, the school employee shall document the action in writing and provide the documentation to the appropriate Advocate. After a school employee refers a non-offending student to the Advocate, the school employee shall take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the student's safety pending action by the Advocate.

These duties are in addition to any steps the school employee is required to take pursuant to the school's disciplinary code or other individual school policy, including duties related to witnessing and intervening in prohibited conduct.



In performing these duties, schools and school employees shall act in a culturally competent manner. At a minimum, cultural competence includes utilizing strategies that reflect the unique cultural traditions and experiences of diverse groups through each phase of the helping process. Schools shall develop resources and tools that address diverse community needs and incorporate culturally appropriate information into prevention and response efforts. Schools and school employees shall make all reasonable efforts to communicate effectively and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by students, parents, and the community, including persons of limited English proficiency, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, and individuals with disabilities. Schools and school employees are encouraged to utilize all resources available from Break the Cycle and other community-based organizations specializing in dating violence and sexual violence.

## **Accommodations**

Any student who has been a victim of dating violence or sexual violence may request accommodation from the school in order to preserve his/her access to meaningful education and safety on campus. Accommodations should only impact the school enrollment, participation, or environment of the student experiencing dating violence or sexual violence. Changes to an alleged perpetrator's school enrollment, participation, or environment must be made through the complaint procedure described below. Requests for accommodation may be made orally or in writing to any school employee or directly to the appropriate Advocate. School employees shall refer all requests for accommodation to the Advocate. If the request is made orally, the Advocate shall document the request in writing. The Advocate shall confer with the Principal and provide a written decision to the requesting student as soon as possible, but in all cases a decision must be made within five business days of the request. A denial to a request for accommodation must include the reasons for the denial.

All requests for accommodation under this section shall be kept strictly confidential. It is the responsibility of the Advocate to notify the student's teachers when an accommodation impacts their classrooms. At no time shall the Advocate notify the alleged perpetrator of the student's request for accommodation, nor shall the Advocate require the student to pursue a complaint against the alleged perpetrator through the school complaint process or the criminal justice system.

All accommodations under this policy are voluntary; a student may choose to decline or rescind any accommodation at any time by notifying the Advocate. The student shall not be subject to any retribution or disciplinary action for such decision and shall not lose the right to request and receive future accommodations.

For middle schools, both types of accommodation require parental notification unless the Advocate determines that it is the student's best interest to pursue the request without the parent.

### **Tier One Accommodations**

Tier One accommodations are those that require a minor change to the student's school enrollment, participation, or environment, do not require a significant expenditure of school resources, and are not already provided for in other school policies. Upon receiving a request for a Tier One accommodation, the Advocate must schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the request and, if the student is a minor and the situation warrants, discuss the possible notification of the student's parent(s).

#### *Middle Schools*

Upon receiving a request for a Tier One accommodation, the Advocate must schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the request and notify the student's parent(s). However, if the Advocate determines that parental notification will endanger the welfare of the student, the Advocate must not involve the student's parent(s).

Requests for Tier One accommodations shall be granted absent exigent circumstances and shall be granted without notice to a minor student's parent(s), unless student is in middle school, consented to by the student or otherwise required by law or school policy. If parental notification is requested by the student or required by law or school policy, the Advocate shall assist the student in developing a plan for safely involving the student's parent(s), including meeting with the student and parent(s), as necessary or as required by law.



Examples of Tier One accommodations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Change of class seat assignment
- Change of locker assignment
- Change of student's class schedule
- Permission to leave class to see a counselor or social worker
- Private space for meeting with counselors and school employees regarding dating violence and sexual violence issues
- Excused absence for classes missed due to dating or sexual violence
- Makeup class work, including homework, quizzes, tests, and any other graded work, for classes missed due to dating violence or sexual violence or threat thereof

### **Tier Two Accommodations**

Tier Two accommodations are those that require a major change to the student's school enrollment, participation, or environment or require a significant expenditure of school resources.

Upon receiving a request for a Tier Two accommodation, the Advocate must schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the request(s) and, if the student is a middle school student or the situation warrants, notification of the student's parent(s) and/or appropriate authorities as required by law.

If parental notification is requested by the student or required by law or school policy, the Advocate shall assist the student in developing a plan for safely involving the student's parent(s), including meeting with the student and parent(s), as necessary.

Examples of Tier Two accommodations include, but are not limited to, creating an Alternative education plan for a student or providing an option of School transfer for a student.

Denials of requests for Tier One or Tier Two accommodations may be appealed within ten days of the denial using the complaint procedure described below.

### **Student Complaints**

A student who is experiencing dating violence or sexual violence has the right to file a complaint with the school requesting that the school take action regarding the abuse they have experienced. There are two types of complaints under this policy:

1. Appeal of a denial of a request for accommodation
2. Request for disciplinary action against an alleged perpetrator, including changes to the alleged perpetrator's school enrollment, participation, or environment

A minor student may file a complaint on his/her own, without parental involvement. A parent may file a complaint on behalf of a minor student with the student's written consent, unless student is enrolled in middle school. A complaint requesting disciplinary action against an alleged perpetrator may be based on either one incident of dating violence or a course of conduct which may comprise more than one incident. In either case, the school official handling the complaint shall consider the entire history of the relationship between the complaining student and the alleged perpetrator, regardless of length, when considering an appropriate resolution.

If a middle school student files a complaint, upon the receipt of the grievance, the Advocate will work with the student on how to involve his/her parent(s). However, if the Advocate determines that parental notification will endanger the welfare of the minor student, the Advocate must not involve the minor student's parent(s).

The complaining student must file a written grievance with the appropriate Advocate, who shall promptly notify the Principal. The Principal shall attempt to resolve the complaint by holding individual meetings with the complaining student and relevant school employees. The Principal may choose to designate another Advocate or school employee to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is requesting disciplinary action against an alleged perpetrator,



the Principal shall also meet individually with the alleged perpetrator and any relevant witnesses. At no time will the Principal meet with both the complaining student and the alleged perpetrator together.

If the complaint is appealing the denial of an accommodation, the Principal shall not require the complaining student to disclose the name of the alleged perpetrator, seek to involve the alleged perpetrator, or notify him/her of the complaint. The content of all meetings held pursuant to this process shall be kept strictly confidential according to the confidentiality policy set forth above.

The Principal shall work together with the complaining student to create a resolution that is acceptable to the school and which adequately addresses the complaining student's safety both on and off campus. The resolution may utilize the accommodations listed in this policy or any other accommodations agreeable to the complaining student. No resolution will be considered final unless agreed to by the complaining student, the alleged perpetrator (if necessary), and the school. Neither mediation nor peer counseling is an acceptable resolution to a dating violence or sexual violence complaint. The Principal shall not offer either as a proposed resolution. Voluntary transfer is a final resolution only if consented to by the complaining student and permitted under school policy.

If the Principal is able to resolve the complaint, the Principal shall document the resolution in writing and provide a copy to the complaining student, alleged perpetrator (if necessary), and any relevant school employees.

If the Principal is unable to satisfactorily resolve the complaint for the complaining student within ten (10) days, the complaining student may file an appeal through the school's appeals process.

Following any appeal, the appeals body shall provide written findings and recommendations to the Principal, the complaining student, the alleged perpetrator (if necessary), and the alleged perpetrator's parent(s) (if necessary). In any hearing conducted pursuant to this policy, in addition to the school's usual hearing procedures, a student who is a victim of dating violence or sexual violence has the following rights, to the extent allowed by the hearing process and permitted by law:

- The right to express his/her wishes regarding resolution to the hearing officer
- The right to have his/her safety considered and respected at all stages of the process
- The right to be notified of time, location, status, and outcome of the hearing in a timely manner
- The right to be present during the hearing
- The right to have an advocate present during the hearing process, including the Advocate, parent, or community-based advocate
- The right to present a victim impact statement which will become part of the record
- The right to have accommodations addressed in any resolution
- The right to meet with the school employees representing the school in the hearing process

## Enforcement of Protection Orders

Enforcement of court-issued protection orders is critical to ensuring safety for students experiencing dating violence and sexual violence. Schools have a duty to take any and all steps necessary to enforce a protection order held by a student. Upon receiving notice that a student holds a protection order, the Advocate shall immediately schedule a meeting with the protected student to create a plan for enforcement of the protection order on the school campus. The Advocate shall work with the protected student to create an enforcement plan regardless of whether the restrained individual is a student. In addition, the Advocate shall provide the protected student with information about reporting violations of the protection order, assist him/her with reporting any violations, and provide him/her with a list of school and community resources.

If the restrained individual is a student, the school shall make any necessary changes to the restrained student's school enrollment, participation, or environment in order to comply with the protection order and ensure the protected student's safety. Changes to the restrained student's school enrollment, participation, or environment that are made pursuant to a valid protection order do not require an additional written complaint or complaint by the



protected student. In addition, the Advocate shall work with the protected student and the school to make any changes to the protected student's school enrollment, participation, or environment to which he/she consents and which are necessary to ensure his/her safety.

The restrained student may file a complaint using the procedures set forth in this policy to challenge any changes made to his/her school enrollment, participation, or environment to enforce a protection order.

## Training for School Employees

XYZ School District is committed to providing training on dating violence and sexual violence to school employees. The District requires that all teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, social workers, and school resource officers receive annual training on the dynamics of dating violence, the relationship between dating violence and other school safety issues, and the school's policies on dating violence. The District will work with schools to provide access to such training, including scheduling and publicizing trainings. Individual schools may work directly with community-based organizations who specialize in teen dating violence and sexual violence to provide trainings specifically targeted to each population. All school employees, including Principals, are encouraged to take advantage of additional training opportunities provided by community-based organizations.

The school employee(s) holding the role of Advocate shall receive additional instruction through a minimum of one full-day of training and ongoing continuing education provided by a community-based organization.

## Student Education

XYZ District is committed to educating its students about dating violence and sexual violence. Schools are required to incorporate prevention education into their curricula for students in grades 7 through 12. Whenever possible, this information shall be presented in conjunction with information about related health and life skills topics. Schools should partner with community-based organizations (CBO) and access community resources to accomplish this goal, particularly those CBO's that have already undergone necessary District screening processes.

## Notice of Policy

In addition to the established process for publicizing District policies, schools shall take the following actions to provide notice of this policy to students and parents:

- Publish the policy on the school website
- Send a copy of the policy, including the names of the designated School-based Advocates, to parents at the beginning of each school year
- Disseminate the policy to all students at the beginning of each school year
- Post information about the policy in classrooms, including the names of the designated Advocates

## Documentation

Advocates shall maintain a complete file for each case of dating violence or sexual violence that they address. The file shall contain written documentation of every action taken by a school official on behalf of a student experiencing dating violence or sexual violence. School employees who take any action on behalf of a student experiencing dating violence or sexual violence shall document the action in writing and provide the documentation to the Advocate. Advocates' files shall be kept in a secure, locked filing cabinet or password-protected computer. These files shall be treated as educational files and access to student files is governed by federal and state laws.



## Definitions

**Accommodation:** a change or modification to a student's school enrollment, participation or environment, which increases access to meaningful education or safety for a student who is experiencing dating violence or sexual violence.

**Community-based Organization (CBO):** non-profit organizations that operate within a single local community, specializing in one or more areas of community or social welfare.

**Cultural sensitivity/competence:** the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable a school district or school employees to educate and respond effectively to students and parents from diverse cultures, groups, and communities.

**Dating partner:** any person, regardless of sex or gender identity, involved in a relationship with another person, where the relationship is primarily characterized by social contact of a sexual or romantic nature, whether casual, serious, short-term or long-term.

**Dating violence:** the use of abusive behaviors by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate or control a current or former dating partner. Dating violence includes but is not limited to:

**Physical abuse:** any intentional unwanted contact with the victim's body by either the perpetrator or an object within the perpetrator's control, regardless of whether such contact causes pain or injuries to the victim.

**Emotional abuse:** the intentional infliction of mental or emotional distress by threat, coercion, stalking, humiliation, or unwanted other verbal or nonverbal conduct.

**Sexual abuse:** any sexual behavior or contact by the perpetrator that is unwanted by the victim and/or interferes with the victim's ability to consent to or control the circumstances of sexual behavior.

**Technology abuse:** the use of digital or high-tech devices, including cell phones, computers, and the internet, to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control a current or former dating partner.

**Harassment:** a pattern of intentional behavior, directed at a specific person, intended to annoy, alarm, or cause emotional distress for no legitimate purpose.

**Parent:** parent, legal guardian, or other adult acting in loco parentis of a child enrolled in XYZ District.

**Perpetrator:** an individual who has committed any act or threat of dating or sexual violence as defined in this policy.

**Predominant aggressor:** the person determined to be the most significant, rather than the first, aggressor taking into consideration the circumstances of both the immediate incident and the course of conduct by the partners during the entirety of the relationship.

**Protection order:** a civil or criminal court order issued in any jurisdiction for the protection of a victim of dating violence or sexual violence that restricts the conduct of an individual toward the victim.

**Safety plan:** an individualized set of actions, strategies, and resources that addresses a student's safety with regard to dating violence or sexual violence.

**School:** each individual education institution, headed by a principal, that operates in XYZ School District.

**School employee:** any person who is employed by XYZ District and who works in a District school, regardless of position.

**School grounds:** the physical location of the school, including the school building, surrounding athletic fields or structures, parking lots, and auxiliary buildings.

**Sexual violence:** sexual assault or abuse of an individual, whether the perpetrator is known to the victim or a stranger.

**Stalking:** a pattern of intentional behavior, directed at a specific person, intended to cause fear or substantial emotional distress.

**Student:** any individual who is or has been enrolled and is or has been in attendance, or is eligible to enroll, at any XYZ District school.

**Victim:** the student who is experiencing dating violence, sexual violence, stalking, or harassment as defined in this policy.



# Sample Policy Statement

A sample position statement for schools to incorporate into their policies, publish on websites, or distribute to parents and community members.



XYZ School District ("the District") is committed to providing a positive learning environment for all students and does not tolerate dating violence, sexual violence, harassment or stalking in its schools. We find that incidents of dating violence, sexual violence, harassment and stalking negatively impact the school environment and the ability of all students to thrive. We strive to ensure that every student is free from these abusive behaviors in their relationships.

We recognize that a student's experience of dating violence impacts not only that student but his/her family and community, as well. We find that the experience of abuse and victimization may make young victims of dating violence particularly vulnerable to engaging in delinquent or high-risk activities. We believe that relationship violence is inextricably linked to other school health and safety issues, such as truancy, weapons on campus, bullying and fighting. This threatens the safety not only of teen victims of relationship violence, but of every student and staff member in the school.

We believe that schools have a responsibility to address these issues with their students. Schools have the opportunity not only to impact individual victims of relationship violence, but also to play a significant role in both responding to and preventing incidents of relationship violence across the school community. Because teens spend a significant portion of their lives in school, schools are uniquely positioned to respond to relationship violence. We believe that schools have a moral and legal obligation to sensitively intervene to support teens who are already experiencing relationship violence. Additionally, schools are ideally positioned to provide preventive measures at an early stage before teens find themselves in violent relationships. Therefore, we believe that schools must proactively address this problem by establishing effective policies and procedures that address relationship violence.

The District intends to meet its obligation to address dating violence in its schools by implementing an administrative policy, establishing a protocol for responding quickly and effectively to complaints of dating violence among students, and focusing attention on prevention of dating violence on campus.

# Implementation Guide

A manual for schools and community partners that offers additional guidance on implementing a school response to dating violence, including policies and procedures, prevention programs, and tips on employee training.



## I. Prevention in the School Community

- a. Curricula
- b. Youth Leadership and Activism
- c. Violence Prevention Teams
- d. Parent Education

## II. Role of School Employees

- a. Training for School Employees
- b. Duties of School Employees

## III. Critical Issues

- a. Confidentiality
- b. Cultural Sensitivity
- c. Parental Involvement
- d. Documentation and Record-Keeping

## IV. Responding to Incidents of Abuse

- a. Protocols for Working with Victims and Alleged Perpetrators
- b. Accommodations for Students Experiencing Dating Violence
- c. Student Complaints

## I. Prevention in the School Community

Educating students on dating violence and healthy relationships is a vital part of effective prevention work. Every classroom provides an opportunity for teachers to incorporate dating violence lessons into their curricula. For this reason, the Sample Policy requires schools to provide prevention education to students.

Prevention education strategies should be developed in accordance with each school's curricula and individual school and community needs. Schools are encouraged to use a variety of prevention education strategies, including:

### a. Prevention Curricula

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate real world issues, such as dating violence, into every class, though the primary setting for dating violence prevention education is likely to be a health or life skills class. Curricula, such as Break the Cycle's [Ending Violence] or Hazelden's Safe Dates, can easily be incorporated into a semester-long health class. Schools should seek evidence-based curricula that offer age-appropriate lessons. As a result of receiving the prevention curriculum, students should, at a minimum, be able to:

- Define dating violence, sexual violence, stalking, and harassment
- Describe power and control dynamics in relationships
- Explain the impact of dating violence on young people



- Recognize and value respectful behavior among friends and dating partners
- Recognize gender equity and gender norms and their affect on young people's ability to make and implement decisions regarding their relationships
- Advise a friend who is experiencing dating violence
- Explain their school's policy on dating violence and identify their School-based Advocates

Use the suggestions in *Building Safe Schools: A Guide to Addressing Teen Dating Violence* to incorporate lessons on dating violence into any classroom setting.

#### b. Youth Leadership and Activism

Schools can utilize after-school time, study halls, or lunch breaks to bring students together to receive training on being peer educators or activists. Groups may be led by students, school employees, or experts from local community-based organizations (CBO's) CBO's. Break the Cycle's *Speak.Act.Change* is one example of a youth activism program that focuses on dating violence issues.

#### c. Violence Prevention and Intervention teams

Schools should consider forming a team to meet regularly to discuss situations that may require early intervention and/or may pose a threat to school safety. The team should be composed of the Advocates, teachers, administrators, and professional staff who have expertise in dating violence. The purpose of the team is to provide an opportunity for school employees to combine their knowledge and information in a way that provides schools with the fullest view of students' needs with regard to prevention of and interventions for abusive behavior. The team may also be used to hear appeals of student complaints or accommodation denials and to provide an annual review of the school's response to dating violence.

Schools should take care to keep all team discussions and records confidential to the extent allowed or mandated by law.

#### d. Parent Education

Parents and caregivers should also be engaged and educated to the fullest extent possible about the need to talk about healthy relationships and abuse. Schools are encouraged to use strategies which will most successfully address the diverse needs of parents in their school community.

Schools should utilize parent workshops, back to school night assemblies, orientation and other parent gatherings, and communication tools to reach parents. The parent awareness workshops should include an overview of the core educational objectives and what parents can do with this knowledge. The importance of modeling respectful behavior in their own relationships, and the impact of that model on their children, should be highlighted.

## II. Role of School Employees

### a. Training for School Employees

Training is a key component of understanding and preventing dating violence. It is the duty of all schools to provide their employees with training on the issues relevant to successfully running a school. Schools should partner with Break the Cycle or domestic violence community-based organizations (CBO's) to

provide these trainings and supplementary trainings throughout the school year. Such trainings will not only educate school employees on the topics but will familiarize them with the resources available in the community. Schools should mandate annual training for teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, social workers, and school resource officers, but trainings should be made available to all school employees regardless of position. The basic school employee training should include the following topics:

- Definitions of dating violence, sexual violence, stalking, and harassment
- Recognizing the early warning signs of abuse
- Barriers to teens leaving abusive relationships
- Understanding the negative health effects of dating violence
- In-school and community services
- Federal and state confidentiality and reporting requirements

In addition to the standard annual training, the Sample Policy encourages that School-based Advocates participate in an additional one-day training, which will cover the issues of dating violence and sexual violence in more depth. Schools should also consider offering ongoing continuing education for Advocates to address topics not covered in the initial one-day training. The list of topics represents the minimum that an Advocate training should cover during the one-day training and ongoing supplemental trainings. Schools may wish to partner with CBO's to provide Advocate trainings.

In addition to the topics listed above, Advocate training shall include the following topics:

- Theories and dynamics of dating violence
- Characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Dating violence in special populations, including LGBTQ teens and parenting teens
- Cultural competence
- Crisis intervention, lethality assessment, and safety planning
- Intersection of dating violence and other school safety issues
- Applicable state and federal laws
- School dating violence policy and procedures

#### b. Duties of School Employees

The Sample Policy establishes a set of duties that all school employees must follow when an incident of dating violence occurs. The employees who have been designated School-based Advocates have additional duties based on their greater level of expertise.

#### *Why Are School-based Advocates Important?*

The Sample Policy provides for specially trained school employees, appointed by the principal, who will be in charge of responding to and advocating for students who are victims of dating violence or sexual violence. The title includes the word "advocate" to convey that these specially trained school employees will have a role that extends beyond merely administering the policy. Advocates will be specially trained on prevention and intervention of dating violence, ideally through a comprehensive training by a CBO whose mission is to address domestic or dating violence and sexual violence.



Teens in need of help will not always seek out the designated Advocate. Our intention is that the Advocate will also be a resource to all school employees, both on issues of dating violence and sexual violence in general and on cases involving particular students. In choosing school employees to serve as Advocates, the principal should select employees who students trust and already consider a resource or who counsel students as a regular part of their job description. Employees whose main job function is academic counseling should not be excluded from consideration but preference should be given to employees with a social work, counseling, or mental health background. Although specialized training in a mental health field is not necessary, it may provide the Advocates with additional understanding on the prevention and intervention of dating violence and sexual violence.

### *Why Must All School Employees Be Prepared to Respond?*

All school employees must also have an explicit duty to respond when they witness or learn of an incident of dating violence. Many students who are experiencing dating violence or sexual violence will turn to the school employee with whom they feel closest, rather than the one whose job description gives them responsibility for the issue. For this reason, the policy describes a standard procedure to be used by all school employees, but also gives school employees the option of referring a student to the Advocate if they feel they cannot provide sufficient support. The referral to the Advocate must be timely and the prescribed duties must be completed as soon as possible; however, a time period is not mandated because of the unique nature of each situation and each school. School employees must consider the safety needs of their students, both the victim and the general population, when fulfilling these duties. School employees should make every effort to complete referrals within 48 hours.

The standard procedures presented in the Sample Policy represent the minimum that must be done for victims of dating violence. Many students will have additional needs that cannot be met by school employees or Advocates. Schools should form partnerships with CBO's to help connect students to resources in the community and guide students through the process of obtaining services.

## III. Critical Issues

### a. Importance of Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the most important factors in a teen's decision to seek help from an adult on any issue, particularly dating violence and sexual violence. Teens' distrust of adults, particularly professionals, is a significant obstacle for school employees to overcome in order to implement effective prevention and intervention programs. For this reason, the Sample Policy requires school employees to maintain confidentiality to the fullest extent permitted by law and other school policies. There are several ways that a school can maintain student confidentiality, including, but not limited to, keeping files regarding incidents and reports under the policy in a locked file cabinet at all times, password protecting any computer software that is utilized to record students' reports, clearly articulating the limits of confidentiality to students, and restricting discussion about students' status as victims or perpetrators in public areas. This Sample Policy encourages schools to promote a culture of confidentiality, which will increase students' willingness to come forward when they are experiencing dating violence or sexual violence.

### b. Cultural Sensitivity

Schools have an affirmative duty to reinforce the importance of culturally sensitive services, particularly in the area of dating violence and sexual violence. The sensitive nature of issues concerning relationships and sexuality requires an equally sensitive response that acknowledges each unique population or community.



### c. Involvement of Parents

Parental involvement in the lives of teens experiencing dating violence is desirable. The Sample Policy extends the need for confidentiality to include disclosures to a minor student's parent. However, middle school and high school students are treated differently on this issue. With high school students, to the extent possible, the ultimate decision of whether or not to notify a victim's parent(s) that he/she is a victim of dating violence belongs with the student. School employees should work together with high school students to find ways of involving parents to ensure their children's safety. Once students choose to notify their parents they are experiencing dating violence or sexual violence, school employees are urged to assist students to develop a plan for such disclosure, including meeting with students and parents as necessary. However, with middle school students, parental involvement is key to the success of the policy. The school should get parents involved from the beginning of the process. With both populations, if disclosure to a student's parent(s) would threaten the student's health or safety, school employees should restrict such disclosures to the extent permissible by law. In these cases, school employees should seek the guidance of CBO's that provide services to teen victims of dating violence and sexual violence.

This issue of parental involvement will likely come up when a high school student makes a request for accommodation. As soon as an Advocate receives a request for accommodation, the Advocate should meet with the requesting student to discuss the student's individual situation. This meeting should include a discussion of notifying the high school student's parent(s) of the request. If the high school student expresses a desire to involve his/her parent(s) in the process, the Advocate should help the student do so safely and productively.

If the student expresses a desire to not involve his/her parent(s) in the process, the Advocate must consult with the school policy on parental notification. If parental notification is required, the Advocate must inform the student and help the student notify his/her parent(s) safely and productively. If school policy does not require parental notification or is silent on the issue, the Advocate should not notify the high school student's parent(s) of the request for accommodation.

Most students will likely choose to involve their parents in the process of requesting and receiving accommodations. However, those that choose not to involve their parents usually do so for good reason, often because of safety concerns. In these situations, the school should respect a student's decision to the extent allowed by law and school policy.

Schools should defer to federal and state law and school policy on the issue of parental notification of requests for accommodation. If a school is unsure how to proceed in an individual case, the school should seek the counsel of CBO's that specialize in providing services to teens.

### d. Documentation and Record-Keeping

Each Advocate is required to maintain a file for every student they work with under the Sample Policy. Advocates' files should contain written documentation of every action taken by a school official in response of a student's abusive or violent behavior. School employees who take any action on behalf of a student experiencing abusive or violent behavior should document the action in writing and provide the documentation to the Advocate. Advocates are encouraged to follow the same documentation protocol used by the school's Title IX Advocates so as to minimize additional work by school employees.

Advocates are encouraged to keep their files in a secure, locked filing cabinet or password-protected computer. In situations where further security is necessary, files may be identified by a number coding system without visible student names. Records of complaints and investigations regarding abusive



behavior should be kept in a file separate from academic records, in order to prevent inadvertent disclosure of confidential information. Access to student files, including by parents, is governed by federal and state laws; nothing in this policy or toolkit should be construed to alter existing school policies on access to student files.

Documentation of incidents of abusive behavior, whether witnessed by school employees or reported by a student, should include the following elements:

- Description of incident(s), including acts by alleged perpetrator, location, date and time, and witnesses (include original complaint form, if available)
- Information about victim and alleged perpetrator information, including class schedules, group and club memberships, and school activities
- Requests for accommodation or services by victim
- All evidence gathered during any investigation
- Report of finding by Advocate, including disciplinary and accommodation recommendations
- Response actions taken with both victim and alleged perpetrator, including safety planning, referrals for services and counseling, and disciplinary actions
- Follow-up actions, including response to disciplinary actions, alleged perpetrator compliance, utilization of referrals for services, reviews of safety plans, and status reports from the victim, including further referrals for services

Schools are encouraged to consider compiling and distributing an annual campus safety report to the community, which will help in evaluating the effectiveness of the school's policies. This report should include a summary of the school employee training and student prevention education efforts and aggregate data on the incidence, types and prevalence of abusive behavior. Administrators may use additional means to evaluate changes in school climate and culture as a result of this policy, such as annual surveys related to school environment and safety. At a minimum, the report should include the following:

- d. Enforcement of Protection Orders
- Number and type of requests for accommodation
  - Number of accommodation requests granted and denied
  - Number and type of early interventions
  - Number of serious incidents of abusive behavior

In addition, this report will include a statement describing what remedial action has been taken to address incidents. Schools are encouraged to use the same compiling and reporting protocol that is required under similar policies.

#### IV. Responding to Incidents of Abuse

When a student discloses an incident of dating violence to a school employee, or if a school employee witnesses an incident that he/she believes is abuse, the Sample Policy requires the school employee to take certain actions or refer the student to an Advocate who will take those actions. Following is a suggested protocol for responding to incidents of abuse:

Separate the victim from the alleged perpetrator

Speak with the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses separately

If necessary, notify the parent(s) of the victim and alleged perpetrator, and schedule a meeting

to discuss the incident and school response

Inform the victim of this policy and his/her rights under the policy, including the accommodations and grievance process

Provide the victim with a list of local resources, including on and off-campus services, and refer him/her to appropriate services

If desired by the victim, create a safety plan that addresses on and off-campus protection

Administer appropriate and immediate consequences to the alleged perpetrator, including initiating disciplinary procedures

Assist alleged perpetrator with resources for counseling services and batterer intervention programs

Assist with enforcement of protection orders as defined by this policy

Offer ongoing assistance and advocacy to the victim and increase supervision of the alleged perpetrator as necessary

a. Protocol for Working with Victims and Alleged Perpetrators

*Working with the Victim*

In working with the victim, schools should make every reasonable effort to protect the due process rights of the alleged perpetrator and ensure the safety of the victim. Schools shall consider adopting the following methods of intervention with the victim:

Conference with the victim and parent/guardian.

Identify immediate actions that can be taken to increase the victim's safety and ability to participate in school without fear or intimidation, including positive behavior support interventions.

Inform the student and parent/guardian of school and community resources as needed, including their right to file charges or seek legal protection.

Encourage the student to report further incidents.

For situations also involving sexual harassment, inform the victim of his or her right to file a complaint alleging sexual harassment directly with the Title IX Coordinator.

Monitor the victim's safety as needed. Assist the victim with safety planning for the school day and for after-school hours.

Document the meeting and any action plans on a complaint form. If the victim or parent/guardian declines to document the incident, note this on a complaint form.

Store all complaint forms in a separate, confidential file and document subsequent follow-up actions and complaints on a complaint form. Administrators may provide the victim with the right to have a support person present during all stages of the investigation.

*Working with the Alleged Perpetrator*

Schools should make every reasonable effort to protect the due process rights of the alleged perpetrator and the safety of the victim. Schools shall consider adopting the following methods of intervention with the alleged perpetrator:

Conference with the alleged perpetrator and parent/guardian.

Allow the alleged perpetrator an opportunity to respond in writing to the allegations.



Emphasize expectations for positive behavior.

Identify and implement disciplinary and other actions and consequences that will be taken to prevent further incidents.

Inform the alleged perpetrator and parent/guardian of help and support available at school or in the community as needed.

Address the seriousness of retaliation against the victim for reporting the incident or cooperating with the investigation.

Increase supervision of the alleged perpetrator as needed.

Document the meeting and action plans on a complaint form.

b. Accommodations for Students Experiencing Dating Violence

The Sample Policy describes the types of accommodations available to students experiencing dating violence or sexual violence and the procedures for requesting and obtaining accommodations. As noted in the definitions section, accommodations are changes that affect only the student who is the victim of dating violence or sexual violence. Nothing in the Sample Policy should be construed to limit a school's ability to discipline a student who is a perpetrator or to change a school's process for initiating such discipline. Schools should use their dating violence policy in conjunction with their disciplinary procedures, as the Sample Policy is intended to address primarily the needs of the victim and complements standard disciplinary procedures which focus primarily on the perpetrator.

The Sample Policy also provides victims the ability to request that the school initiate disciplinary procedures against an alleged perpetrator of dating violence or sexual violence. This process is meant to be used to address incidents that occur off-campus but which have an impact on campus, as well as incidents that occur on campus but which were not witnessed by a school employee. Such requests for disciplinary action are not accommodations but complaints, which follow a different set of procedures, because they impact another student's rights, and are discussed in another section of the Sample Policy.

Schools should allow requests for accommodations to be made orally or in writing to any school employee to encourage a student who is a victim to communicate such a request in the method most comfortable for him/her. One of the goals of any policy should be to empower students who are experiencing dating violence to seek help in ending their abusive relationships. To that end, the fewer restrictions placed on the ways that students can seek help, the more students will come forward with requests. In addition, feedback from youth focus groups indicate that most students communicate complaints or suggestions to school employees orally and would be most likely to make requests for accommodation the same way. However, in order to maintain a complete record of the assistance given to each student, it is imperative that school employees transcribe oral requests into writing and refer the requesting student to an Advocate.

School employees are encouraged to use the Accommodations Request Form provided in this kit, ideally while the requesting student is present to ensure accuracy. Requests for multiple accommodations may be made on one form and should be treated by the school as one request. The Sample Policy does not include an exhaustive list of accommodations, and instead allows schools and students the freedom to craft accommodations that best meet the needs of each unique situation. However, the requirements and the examples should serve as a guide to the type of accommodations that may be considered.

In order to maintain complete records and provide a streamlined response, all requests for accommodation



should be made through an Advocate. If a request is made through another school employee and the requesting student wishes, that employee is encouraged to remain involved through the process. However, it is important for a requesting student to also have the support of the Advocate, who is specially trained to handle requests for accommodation and who is the student's representative with the school administration. The Advocate is responsible for bringing all requests to the attention of the principal, who should confer with the Advocate to make a decision. Because of the sensitive nature of the requests and the safety concerns for the requesting student and the general student population, all school employees should be prompt in responding to requests for accommodation and passing them on to the next responsible person.

Maintaining confidentiality is the key to maintaining students' continued faith in and reliance on a policy. For this reason, knowledge and discussion of requests for accommodation must be limited to those school employees actively involved in the process. The school employees involved will depend on the nature of the individual request, but may include the employee to whom the request is made, the Advocate, the principal, and the teachers whose classrooms are affected by the requested accommodations. Because accommodations affect the victim only and the alleged perpetrator's rights are not impacted, there is no need for the alleged perpetrator to be notified of the request or the outcome. In addition, the requesting student may choose not to divulge the name of the alleged perpetrator in the request. Notification of the requesting student's parent(s) is discussed below.

In furtherance of the goal of empowering a student who is a victim of dating violence or sexual violence to seek help, schools should not place additional burdens on students who are seeking accommodations. This includes requiring students to pursue civil or criminal remedies outside of the school or punishing a student for withdrawing a request or terminating an accommodation already granted.

The Sample Policy divides accommodations into two types: Tier 1 and Tier 2. The differences between Tier 1 and Tier 2 accommodations are in the significance of the change requested and the amount of school resources that must be expended to implement the change. Schools are encouraged to differentiate in their policy between minor changes, such as a locker reassignment, and major changes, such as a school transfer.

Tier 1 accommodations are the types of actions that are routinely taken with regard to a student's schedule or class work and which do not require a significant investment of resources by the school or a school district. Because Tier 1 accommodations are primarily administrative changes which do not require significant effort by schools, but which may have a significant impact on a victim's safety and security, the Sample Policy requires the school to automatically grant such requests absent "exigent circumstances." Further, all denials should be issued in writing and, in the case of a denial of a Tier 1 request, the principal must clearly articulate the relevant exigent circumstances.

Tier 2 accommodations are the types of actions which involve a significant change to a student's schedule, class work, or school enrollment, those which require a significant investment of resources by the school or a school district, or both. Because Tier 2 accommodations require significant changes for the requesting student or require significant effort by schools, the Advocate and the principal must balance the requesting student's safety, the safety of the student population, school policy, and the feasibility of making the requested change. However, in making the decision the principal should put considerable weight on the impact a request change will have on the requesting student's safety, educational quality, and ability to end an abusive relationship.



It is important to note that the threat of abuse is sufficient to allow a student to request accommodation. This is particularly relevant if the student is requesting excused absences or makeup class work as a result of missing school due to fear of violence, but may be the basis for any request for accommodation. This inclusion is vital to prevention of violence, as well as the perception among students that they need not wait until violence escalates to seek help from the school.

### c. Student Complaints

The Sample Policy provides a process for a student experiencing dating violence to file complaints against the student that is abusing him/her. Many schools already have a procedure in place for student complaints. Schools should seek to utilize existing procedures to the extent possible, but suggest that schools first evaluate these procedures to ensure that they meet the unique needs of a dating violence situation.

Two types of complaints that could arise for a student experiencing dating violence are outlined in the Sample Policy. Other types of complaints, not explicitly included, may also be filed if they arise from a dating violence situation. The Sample Policy limits the individuals who may file a complaint for dating violence to an individual student or the student's parent. In high school, a student may file a complaint without parental permission but a parent may only file a complaint on behalf of his/her child with the child's explicit consent. In middle school, a student may file a complaint on his or her own, but parent(s) will be notified or a parent may file a complaint on behalf of his/her child with or without the child's explicit consent.

When a student files a complaint seeking discipline against another student, the Advocate who receives the complaint is strongly encouraged to follow this procedure:

Meet with the victim to discuss the complaint

Determine whether notification of the victim's parents is required and whether notification would jeopardize the student's safety

Determine what steps are necessary to ensure the victim's safety, including whether necessary steps will infringe on the alleged perpetrator's educational rights

If necessary, meet with the alleged perpetrator, separate from the victim at all times. If the complaint is seeking only an accommodation, the Advocate should not seek to involve the alleged perpetrator, or notify him/her of the complaint unless necessary to preserve the complaining student's safety

Speak with any witnesses to the abuse

Determine appropriate disciplinary sanctions or accommodations, considering the history of the abuse and relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator

Submit a written report of the investigation to the principal, including recommendations for disciplinary actions against the perpetrator and accommodations for the victim

It is vital for school employees to recognize that dating violence often consists of a course of conduct. Because of this, any one action, viewed individually, may not appear serious and can only be accurately evaluated within the context of a pattern of abuse. For this reason, schools should allow a complaint, particularly a request for discipline of a perpetrator, to be based on a series of incidents, if the complaining student chooses to do so. If the complaining student alleges only one incident of dating violence or sexual violence, it is still important for the decision-maker to view the incident in the context of the relationship



between the students. Other relevant factors include the severity of the violence or threat of violence, safety of the complaining student, and prior acts or threats of violence by the alleged perpetrator with other students or family members.

The complaint procedure described in the Sample Policy is meant to be simple. In order to maintain a proper record, all complaints must be in writing. The Advocate may assist a student in this process. Advocates are encouraged to use the Complaint Form provided in this toolkit. Because of the sensitive nature of the complaints and safety concerns for the complaining student, all steps should be completed within 48 hours whenever possible.

The principal has the ultimate responsibility to resolve all complaints but may choose to designate another school employee to fulfill the duty. It is strongly encouraged that the designee be another Advocate or school employee with expertise in dating violence. It is important for the complaining student to have a representative during the complaint process. This role should be filled by the Advocate who assisted the student with the complaint.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the principal should meet with all the involved parties separately to discuss the complaint. The involved parties will be different in different types of complaints. In a case where the only complaint is an appeal of a denial of accommodations, the alleged perpetrator is not an involved party and should not be notified of the complaint or included in any way.

The Sample Policy does not define resolution of a complaint, except to limit the options available. The resolution should be crafted to meet the needs of each individual case. However, the principal should never try to bring the parties together for mediation. Because of the power imbalance and controlling behavior that often exists in dating violence, mediation is rarely effective and may actually further victimize a student who has experienced violence.

The resolution should balance the safety concerns and educational needs of the victim with the resources available at the school and should be agreeable to all the involved parties. If the complaint requests discipline of the alleged perpetrator, schools are encouraged to use the policy as a complement to their regular disciplinary procedures. The alleged perpetrator's agreement is only necessary if the final resolution involves an agreement between the parties in addition to or in lieu of disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator. If a school is unsure how to resolve a complaint in a particular case, the principal may wish to consult with an appropriate CBO.

The school should only share the written resolution with the alleged perpetrator and his/her parent if the student is involved in the complaint. The principal should use discretion in documenting the resolution, particularly if the resolution will be shared with the alleged perpetrator. The principal should make certain that the information in the written resolution does not give the alleged perpetrator information of which he/she would not otherwise have knowledge and which may threaten the safety of the complaining student. For example, if the resolution involves the voluntary transfer of the complaining student to a new school, the written resolution should not include the name and location of the new school. The content of the final resolution should be kept confidential, according to the same standard applied in other sections of the Sample Policy.

In addition to a basic complaint process, schools are encouraged to provide students with an appeals process. This need not be specific to dating violence, but can be the same process that is available to all students.



If a hearing takes place pursuant to a school's dating violence policy, the Sample Policy recommends that the complaining student be given additional rights during the hearing process. While most schools' hearing procedures and the principles of due process address the rights of a student being disciplined, frequently they do not adequately protect the rights of a student who is a victim of dating violence. These additional rights represent the minimum protections necessary to guarantee the victim meaningful participation in the hearing process.

These additional rights do not apply equally in all hearings. Some of these rights are not actually additional rights, but merely basic procedural necessities, particularly in cases where the complaining student is the only student involved in the complaint (i.e., an appeal). A hearing officer should afford a victim each of these rights to the extent they are applicable in each individual case.

#### d, Enforcement of Protection Orders

The Sample Policy explicitly requires schools to enforce protection orders as required by federal and state law(s). Schools also have an obligation to prevent future violence against their students. By helping a student enforce a protection order, schools have the opportunity to protect that student, as well as the entire school, from future acts of violence. The school can also send a message to students who are experiencing dating violence or sexual violence that the school is their ally and will do its part to keep them safe.

Under the Sample Policy, a school's obligation with regard to a protection order arises when it receives notice that one of its students holds such an order. The school may receive a copy of a protection order directly from a student, a parent, or the student's attorney. The school may also be notified by a community-based organization from which the student has been receiving services. Regardless of how or when the school receives notice of a protection order, the obligation to aid in enforcement attaches upon such notice. The school employee first receiving notice of the protection order should notify an Advocate and provide him/her with a copy of the order. The Advocate is responsible for working with the protected student to create a safety plan and determine how to proceed with the order. The Advocate is encouraged to work with the student to create a safety plan regardless of whether the restrained individual is a student at the same school. If the restrained individual is not a student, the safety plan should focus on how to restrict his/her access to the school and how to protect the student's safety traveling to and from school.

If the restrained individual is a student, the school should first make changes to his/her schedule or enrollment in order to satisfy the requirements of the protection order. The school may make changes to the protected student's schedule or enrollment only after first considering changes to the restrained student, unless such changes are explicitly requested by the protected student. The Sample Policy seeks to empower students to end abusive relationships; because of this, the school should not discourage the protected student from changing his/her schedule or enrollment in response to a protection order. Absent such a request, however, schools should only change the protected student's schedule or enrollment if absolutely necessary to protect the student's safety.

Such changes to the restrained student's schedule or enrollment need not go through the complaint procedure. Protection orders are granted after a hearing where the restrained individual is granted all the protections of due process. It is not necessary to subject the protected student to another hearing, which would require further contact with the restrained student. A properly adjudicated protection order serves the same purpose as a complaint and hearing pursuant to the Sample Policy. The restrained student may dispute changes to his/her schedule or enrollment by filing a complaint.

## Request for Accommodation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions about the most recent or most serious incident:

Describe the relationship between you and the alleged perpetrator (*perpetrator's name optional*):

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When and where did it happen?

\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses?     yes     no

Name(s) and Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this the first incident?     yes     no    Number of Previous Incidents: \_\_\_\_\_

Other information, including previous incidents or threats: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What accommodation(s) are being requested? Please check all that apply.

- Change of class seat assignment
- Change of locker assignment
- Change of student's class schedule
- Permission to leave class to see a counselor or social worker
- Private space for meeting with counselors and school officials regarding dating violence and sexual violence issues
- Excused absence for classes missed due to dating or sexual violence
- Makeup class work for classes missed due to dating violence or sexual violence or threat thereof
- Alternative education plan for student
- School transfer for student
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_



I certify that all statements made in this request for accommodation are true and complete. Any intentional misstatement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline. I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary to respond to this request.

**Signatures:**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School official receiving request: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**If this request was filled out by someone other than the student, please sign:**

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For School Employee:**

Notes of action(s) taken: \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional information from student or school employee: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Student Complaint

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the complaint?

- Appeal of a denial of a request for accommodation
- Request for disciplinary action against an alleged perpetrator, including changes to the alleged perpetrator's school enrollment, participation, or environment

If requesting disciplinary action, please print the name of the alleged perpetrator:

\_\_\_\_\_

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**If appealing denial of a request for accommodation, please attach original accommodation request.**

**If requesting disciplinary action against another student, please answer the following questions about the most recent or most serious incident:**

Describe the relationship between you and the alleged perpetrator: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When and where did it happen? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses?     yes     no

Name(s) and Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this the first incident?     yes     no    Number of Previous Incidents: \_\_\_\_\_

Other information, including previous incidents or threats: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



I certify that all statements made in this complaint are true and complete. Any intentional misstatement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline. I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary to investigate this complaint.

**Signatures:**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School employee receiving request: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**If this request was filled out by someone other than the student, please sign:**

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For School Employee:**

Notes of action(s) taken: \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional information from student or staff: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Resolution of Complaint

School Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Complaining Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe resolution: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Signatures:

I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary to implement this resolution.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that all statements made in this form are true and complete. Any intentional misstatement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline.

I have attached original complaint form.

Principal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If disciplinary action was taken, the alleged perpetrator must also sign.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## General Action

School Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Complaining Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

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Necessary follow-up: \_\_\_\_\_

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I certify that all statements made in this form are true and complete. Any intentional misstatement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please remember to pass this form along to the appropriate person for further action or documentation.**

## Protective Order Enforcement Plan

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Employee Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, **[Contracting Student's Name]**, agree to stay **[Number of Feet]** feet away from **[Victim's Name]** while on **[School Name]** campus and surrounding areas, including sports fields, gyms, library, parking lots, bus stops, and other:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I agree to keep the same distance at school-sponsored events, including dances, sporting events, and school trips.

I agree to inform administration of any changes to my school schedule and extracurricular activities.

In addition, I agree to the following immediate changes:

Arrival/Departure from School: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Class Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Extracurricular Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If I violate this agreement on purpose, I understand that I will be disciplined in the following ways:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**This agreement is valid from: [Date] to [Date].**

### Signatures:

Contracting Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(If contracting student is under 18.)

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





# TIPS FOR TEENS

## LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE AN UNHEALTHY ONLINE RELATIONSHIP

Did you know that a most half of junior high students say they have been bullied online? And a most a fifth say they've experienced online dating violence? It's important to know that online relationships, just like real-life relationships, can be unhealthy. If you think you or someone you know is in an unhealthy, abusive online relationship, this tip sheet is for you.

Relationship abuse is when the person you are dating hurts, insults or scares you, tries to control you, makes you feel bad about yourself, pressures you to do things you don't want to do, or tries to keep you away from your friends and family. *Whether it occurs online or offline, these are all signs of an abusive, unhealthy relationship.*

This tip sheet was funded by AVON Foundation for Women and created by the Canadian Women's Foundation in partnership with Media Smarts.

For more tip sheets, visit [canadianwomen.org/AVON](http://canadianwomen.org/AVON)



AVON  
SAFE & SOUND PROGRAM

# THE HARM OF ONLINE ABUSE IS DIFFERENT

- It's easier for abusers to keep regular tabs on your whereabouts and online activity.
- The abuse occurs on the same platforms (e.g. social media, text) you use to interact with friends and family, making you feel like you can't escape it.
- Once it has started it can escalate very quickly, and you can't control it by yourself.
- It's permanent and may happen in public spaces.

## SIGNS YOU MAY BE IN AN UNHEALTHY ONLINE RELATIONSHIP HAS SOMEONE:

- Made you share your passwords and/or other confidential information?
- Shared private videos or photos of you without your permission?
- Kept tabs, spied on, or stalked you online?
- Made you unfriend people?
- Pressured you to send a sexual photo of yourself or sent you unwanted sexual photos?
- Spread rumours or embarrassed you publically online?
- Sent messages or texts that made you uncomfortable, threatened or afraid?
- Threatened to do any of these things, or other things that made you feel uncomfortable?

## NOT ALL ABUSIVE ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS ARE WITH PEOPLE YOU KNOW IN REAL LIFE

Some people look online for teens they can lure into unhealthy situations. Most of the time, people who target teens online don't pretend to be anyone they're not, and don't hide what they're looking for. They target mostly girls in their early teens, as well as boys who are or think they may be gay or bisexual, and shower them with attention, sympathy, affection and kindness, to gain their trust and persuade them that they love and understand them. These are tactics to lure them into an abusive relationship and other dangerous situations.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP ONLINE OR OFFLINE

If you're in an abusive relationship, get help. Take screenshots of the messages and posts that the person has sent you in case they later delete them. Talk to friends, parents, teachers, or other adults you trust. If your partner has threatened violence, either online or offline, contact the police.

If there's nobody you can or want to talk to in person, you can call an anonymous helpline like [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca) (1-800-668-6868).

## WHAT FRIENDS CAN DO

**Friends can play an important role in helping to prevent or leave an unhealthy relationship:**

- If your friend tells you that they think they are in an abusive relationship, listen to them and believe them.
- There is so much fear and shame that happens in an abusive relationship that it can be even more hurtful if someone has built up the courage to talk about it and they are shut down or not believed.
- If you suspect a friend is getting involved in an unhealthy relationship – as a victim, or an abuser, talk to them about it. If that doesn't help, talk to their parents, a teacher or another adult you trust.
- Don't be part of the abuse by forwarding or sharing any embarrassing or sexual material that's being spread around.
- Call people out when they say or do things that make it seem like relationship abuse is okay or like someone may have "deserved" to be a victim.

**For additional resources on online safety, visit [www.mediasmarts.ca](http://www.mediasmarts.ca).**

## IT'S NEVER YOUR FAULT

Talking to people about what is going on and how it makes you feel is not being disloyal. Don't blame yourself for things that you may have done, like sharing your password or letting them have sexual photos of you. Nothing you do ever gives someone the right to abuse you.





**TECHNOLOGY, TEEN DATING  
VIOLENCE AND ABUSE, AND  
BULLYING**

*IN PART*

*198 pages*

**Janine M. Zweig, Ph.D.**  
**Meredith Dank, Ph.D.**  
**Pamela Lachman**  
**Jennifer Yahner**

URBAN INSTITUTE  
Justice Policy Center  
2100 M St. NW  
Washington, DC 20037

**URBAN INSTITUTE**  
Justice Policy Center

URBAN INSTITUTE  
Justice Policy Center  
2100 M STREET, NW

WASHINGTON, DC 20037  
[www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org)

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## Abstract

The goal of this project was to expand knowledge about the types of violence and abuse experiences youth have via technology (e.g., social networking sites, texting on cell phones), and how the experience of such cyber abuse within teen dating relationships or through bullying relates to other life factors. A total of 5,647 youth from ten middle and high schools in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania participated in the study. Fifty-one percent of the sample was female, 26 percent identified as non-white, and 94 percent identified as heterosexual. The study employed a cross-sectional, survey research design, collecting data via paper-pencil survey. The survey targeted all youth who attended school on a single day and achieved an 84 percent response rate.

The study's findings showed that more than a quarter (26 percent) of youth in a relationship said they experienced some form of cyber dating abuse victimization in the prior year. Females were twice as likely as males to report being a victim of sexual cyber dating abuse in the prior year. More than a tenth (12 percent) of youth in a relationship said they had perpetrated cyber dating abuse in the prior year. Females reported greater levels of non-sexual cyber dating abuse perpetration than males. By contrast, male youth were significantly more likely to report perpetrating sexual cyber dating abuse. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth reported significantly higher rates of cyber dating abuse victimization and perpetration than heterosexual youth.

With regard to other forms of teen dating violence and abuse, 84 percent of cyber dating abuse victims also reported psychological dating abuse victimizations, 52 percent reported physical dating violence victimization, and 33 percent reported sexual coercion. Further, 73 percent of cyber dating abuse perpetrators also reported psychological dating abuse perpetration, 55 percent also reported physical dating violence perpetration, and 11 percent reported sexual coercion perpetration. Overall, less than one out of ten victims of dating abuse reported seeking help, with half as many male victims as female victims seeking help.

Notably, cyber dating abuse victims and perpetrators were more than two and three times as likely, respectively, as non-victims and non-perpetrators to also report experiencing and/or perpetrating cyber bullying behaviors against non-intimates. Similarly, cyber bullying victims and perpetrators were almost three and four times as likely, respectively, as non-victims and non-perpetrators to also report experiencing and/or perpetrating cyber dating abuse against romantic partners.

With regard to other findings on bullying experiences, the study showed that one in six youth (17 percent) reported being victims of cyber bullying, with females experiencing significantly higher victimization rates with regard to cyber bullying than males. Fewer than one in ten youth reported perpetrating cyber bullying in the prior year. Female youth reported significantly higher perpetration rates with regard to cyber bullying than males. LGBTQ youth reported significantly higher rates of cyber bullying victimization and perpetration than heterosexual youth. Nine out of ten cyber bullying victims also experienced psychological bullying victimization, and the same portion of cyber bullying perpetrators also perpetrated psychological bullying. There was

also a fairly high degree of overlap between cyber bullying and physical bullying, with two-thirds to three-quarters of cyber bullying victims/perpetrators also reporting physical bullying victimization/perpetration. Despite this overlap, only one out of six bullying victims reported seeking help, with twice as many female victims as male victims seeking help.



# Sexual Assault, Rape and Dating Abuse Exist; Affect 1 in 3

Posted: 05/05/2015 3:05 pm EDT | Updated: 05/05/2015 3:59 pm EDT

With Jameis Winston being selected as the No. 1 pick in the 2015 NFL Draft, there is likely to be a spotlight on sexual assault and dating abuse. While some will question his guilt or innocence, the important messages concerning sexual assault prevention, rape education and abuser accountability and rehabilitation shouldn't get lost in the firestorms that surround these high profile incidents. Beyond raising awareness, we have to take a hard look at addressing the root of the abusive behavior.

More than **1 in 3 women** (35.6 percent) and more than 1 in 4 men (28.5 percent) in the United States have experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. We know that these heinous acts are often a prelude to even worse actions as each and every day, three women die at the hands of their spouse, boyfriend, or former partner.

Here at [The Hotline](#) and [loveisrespect](#), a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and Break the Cycle, we hear from the young women and men who suffer sexual assault and violence from abusive partners each and every day. And with **1 in 3 U.S. teens** experiencing some form of dating abuse, we know this problem is prevalent in our communities and will continue to be unless we take action. It's important to start talking early about fostering healthy dating attitudes and relationships -- as well as educating teens and young adults about how to identify and avoid abusive behaviors.

Our prevention programs at [loveisrespect](#) include resources available for educators and parents to help teens and young adults. We are engaging with schools all over the country, participating in college and high-school events and providing them with tools they can use in the classroom. We are focused on growing these educational efforts and welcome community involvement and support.

[The Hotline](#) and [loveisrespect](#) also offer online resources for those who feel they might be abusive and would like to seek help. There are programs dedicated solely to helping abusers through batterer intervention programs.

People need to understand that while change is possible, it is not easy. Someone who engages in abusive behavior can stop if there is an honest willingness to change and diligence applied to the process of changing coupled with the understanding that it will take time. Taking full responsibility for their actions and seeking help is the first step to living lives that don't result in verbal, physical or sexually abusive behavior. And those who do so should be supported and surrounded by people who hold them accountable for their actions.

High-profile cases and serious accusations make headlines. The best way we, as a global community, can stand up for victims and show that sexual assault, rape and dating abuse are not tolerable is by preventing it in the first place. Let's educate and spread understanding of what a healthy relationship looks like, and allow those seeking help with their abusive behavior to be given the chance to nurture change.

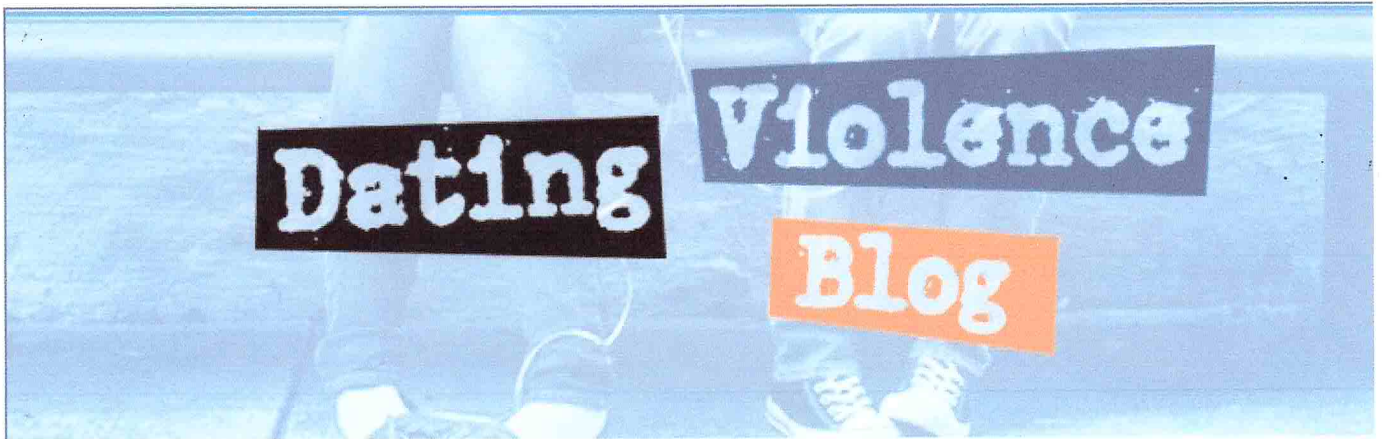
## About [loveisrespect](#) and the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)

*The National Domestic Violence Hotline is a non-profit organization providing victims and survivors with life-saving tools and immediate support. Loveisrespect is a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and Break the Cycle where highly trained peer advocates offer free phone, text and chat services to young people 24/7/365. Callers to the hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) can expect highly trained advocates to offer compassionate support, crisis intervention information and referral services in more than 200 languages. Visitors to [TheHotline.org](#) and [loveisrespect.org](#) can find information about domestic violence, safety planning, local resources, and ways to support the organization.*

*The Hotline relies on the generous support of individuals, private gifts from corporations and foundations and federal grants. It is funded in part by Grant Number 90EVO407/03 from the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)/ Family Violence Prevention and Services Program](#), a division of the Family and Youth Services Bureau in the Administration for Children and Families. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Administration for Children and Families or the U.S. Department of HHS.*

**Follow Katie Ray-Jones on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/KtRayJones](http://www.twitter.com/KtRayJones)**

**MORE: [Rape](#) [Rape](#) [NFL](#) [Dating Abuse](#) [Domestic Violence](#) [Teen Dating Violence](#)**



*Please note: Entries within this blog may contain reference to instances of domestic abuse, dating abuse, sexual assault, abuse or harassment. At all times, Break the Cycle encourages readers to take whatever precautions necessary to protect themselves emotionally and psychologically. If you would like to speak with an advocate, please contact one of our 24/7 Love Is Respect advocates at [866-331-9474 \(tel:866-331-9474\)](tel:866-331-9474). Online chat and texting are also available.*

## Mother and Daughter Work to End Dating Violence with Break the Cycle



<http://blog/mother-and-daughter-work-end-dating-violence-break-cycle>

Working  
to end  
dating  
violence  
across

generations? Now that's making a difference.

Joanne Caruso is a former Break the Cycle board member with two daughters. While dating violence isn't something she has personally experienced, she felt as a parent it was an issue near and dear to her heart. So when her daughter, Christine Zaccaro, was looking for a community service opportunity, Joanne encouraged her to volunteer



with Break the Cycle. Christine helped out by working after-school in our offices.

Now, Christine attends Boston College and dances with Synergy, a hip hop dance company that performs and competes at various venues across Boston and the East Coast. Each of Boston College's dance teams participated in Showdown, one of the school's biggest events of the year, and chose a charity they're dancing for. Synergy won the competition, and donated its prize money to Break the Cycle.

## 1/1 Synergy Dance Company @ The Annual Show...



"I chose Break the Cycle because what I did with Break the Cycle was really empowering," said Christine. "Sometimes we get so wrapped up in work and school that we don't realize this is an issue on our campus too."

Not only did Break the Cycle help Christine ignite a passion to end dating violence, but Break the Cycle also helped her avoid a potentially abusive relationship. In high school, Christine noticed a boyfriend of her's acted strangely. "He was checking my phone and getting upset about little things I was doing," said Christine. "I thought it was my fault and I was doing something wrong, but then I realized, no, this is not real life." After [reviewing the warning signs of dating abuse \(//www.breakthecycle.org/warning-signs\)](http://www.breakthecycle.org/warning-signs) on Break the Cycle's website, she recognized eight out of the ten signs, and broke up with him.

So what kind of advice can this mother and daughter duo give to peers and parents alike? For Joanne, it's about being aware and open to the possible warning signs of abusive behaviors. "I think sometimes it's just a hard issue to really think something's going on with your child with this," she said. "You think it's different with your kid. Keep yourself [open to the signs \(//www.breakthecycle.org/warning-signs\)](http://www.breakthecycle.org/warning-signs), especially if the person your kid is dating is someone you like that you may not want to think is capable of being abusive."

She also recommends that parents go through the Break the Cycle website, or research dating violence, and show those websites to their kids. "Dating issues and relationships aren't easy to talk about, but just going through the website was a really great thing because my kids could do it on their own time and ask questions if they wanted to." Although dating abuse is a tough topic to bring up, she feels giving her kids the tools to find out more gave them the ability to learn about the issue.

For college students, Christine reiterates [it's never the fault of the person experiencing abuse \(//www.breakthecycle.org/learn-about-dating-violence\)](http://www.breakthecycle.org/learn-about-dating-violence). "Victims tend to think it's their fault and automatically think

they did something wrong and it happened for a reason and they choose to be quiet about it. Talk to someone about it or report the issue and don't put the blame on yourself because it's not your fault."

Furthermore, Joanne and Christine believe in [supporting nonprofits committed to ending dating violence](http://www.breakthecycle.org/donate) ([//www.breakthecycle.org/donate](http://www.breakthecycle.org/donate)), supporting those experiencing abusive behavior, and educating students about dating abuse and sexual assault. "Every parent has a responsibility to try and educate themselves and their children," said Joanne. "If they can do more, they should."



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# Prevention in Middle School Matters

## A Summary of Findings of Teen Dating Violence Behaviors and Associated Risk Factors Among 7th- Grade Students

2011

Author(s): [RTI International](#), and [Blue Shield of California Foundation](#)

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A new study of 1,430 7th grade students reveals that many 7th-graders are dating and experiencing physical, psychological and electronic dating violence. More than one in three students (37%) surveyed report being a victim of 'psychological dating violence' and nearly one in six (15%) report being a victim of 'physical dating violence.' This study also found that while some attitudes and behaviors associated with increased risk for teen dating violence are pervasive, nearly three-quarters of students surveyed report talking to their parents about dating and teen dating violence. Parent-child communication is considered a protective factor that reduces the risk for teen dating violence.

The study was conducted by RTI International (RTI) on behalf of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Blue Shield of California Foundation as part of an independent evaluation of their *Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships* (*Start Strong*) initiative. These results serve as the baseline of a larger evaluation to assess the overall impact of the program.

The baseline findings are important. Teen dating violence prevention in middle school matters. From these data, we are learning that teen dating violence behaviors and associated risk factors are occurring among middle school students in this study. We need to better understand this young age group and how best to promote healthy relationships and prevent teen dating violence in middle school.

*Start Strong* is one of the largest initiatives ever funded that targets 11- to 14-year-olds to promote healthy relationships in order to prevent teen dating violence and abuse. The *Start Strong* program utilizes a multi-faceted approach to rally entire communities to promote healthy relationship behaviors among middle school students.

Parent engagement is a key component of *Start Strong*. As the study shows, many of the 7th-graders that were surveyed are talking to their parents about dating topics, including teen dating violence. This highlights the important role parents can play in prevention efforts. *Start Strong* educates parents of middle school students about these issues so they can help their children navigate new relationships (both online and offline), including teaching parents the warning signs of abuse and how to start conversations about healthy relationships at an early age.

We know that these early relationships can set the stage for the future. Teen dating violence and abuse is a major public health problem in this country. In addition to undermining young people's individual growth and academic potential, dating violence and abuse puts young people at risk for long-term health consequences, serious injury and even death. Prevention needs to be a public health priority.

### Key Findings

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- Many of the 7<sup>th</sup>-graders in this sample are dating and experiencing dating violence.

- 75% of students surveyed report ever having a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- More than 1 in 3 (37%) students surveyed report being a victim of psychological dating violence in the last 6 months.
- Nearly 1 in 6 (15%) students surveyed report being a victim of physical dating violence in the last 6 months.
- Nearly 1 in 3 (31%) students surveyed report being a victim of electronic dating aggression in the last 6 months.
- **Teen dating violence is not happening behind closed doors.**
  - More than 1 in 3 (37%) of students surveyed report having witnessed boys or girls being physically violent to persons they were dating in the last 6 months.
- **Attitudes and behaviors that are associated with increased risk for teen dating violence and abuse are pervasive.**
  - Nearly 2 out of 3 students surveyed (63%) strongly agree with a harmful gender stereotype, such as “girls are always trying to get boys to do what they want them to do,” or “with boyfriends and girlfriends, the boy should be smarter than the girl.”
  - Sexually harassing behaviors occur frequently in middle school. Nearly half of students surveyed (49%) report having been a victim of sexual harassment in the past 6 months, such as being “touched, grabbed, or pinched in a sexual way,” or that someone “made sexual jokes” about them.
- **Parents have an important role to play in preventing teen dating violence and abuse.**
  - Nearly three-quarters of 7th-grade students surveyed report that, in the last 6 months, they “sometimes or often” talk with their parents about dating topics such as, “how to tell if someone might like you as a boyfriend or girlfriend.”
  - Middle school is a key time for parents to educate themselves about these issues so they can help their children navigate new relationships (both online and offline), including what is acceptable and what is not.

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## Teen Dating Violence Affects Adult Health

Written by Sarah Glynn

Published: Tuesday 11 December 2012

### **Victims of teen dating violence have a higher chance of experiencing adverse health outcomes as young adults.**

This study published in the journal *Pediatrics*, was set out to identify the longitudinal link between teen dating violence and negative health consequences.

There were 5,681 teenagers (between the ages of 12 and 18) involved in the experiment from 1994 to 2002 who were asked to fill out surveys as part of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health.

The teens were asked questions regarding their heterosexual dating experiences so that the experts could evaluate dating violence victimization at both a physical and psychological level.

Five years later, when the subjects were between the ages of 18 and 25, they received a follow-up where they were asked questions regarding self-esteem, antisocial behaviors, sexual risk behaviors, suicide attempt, substance use, depressive symptoms, and adult intimate partner violence (IPV) victimization.

After adjusting for variables such as child maltreatment, sociodemographics, and pubertal status, results showed that after five years, adolescent females who previously reported victimization by a boyfriend had a higher chance of:

- drinking heavily
- smoking
- experiencing symptoms of [depression](#)
- thinking about suicide

Adolescent males who were victims of dating violence by a girlfriend were more likely to report:

- [suicidal thoughts](#)
- increased anti-social behavior
- marijuana use

In fact, previous research also found [a link between dating violence and suicide attempts among young people](#).

The researchers also discovered that **boys and girls who were victimized as teenagers had around two to three times the likelihood of being in violent relationships again later in life**, as opposed to adolescents who were never involved in a dangerous relationship.

The results of this study indicate how critical screening and prevention of adolescent dating violence should be used for both males and females. However, a previous report indicated that although teen dating violence is a serious problem among teens, [less than one quarter of psychiatrists consistently screen for it](#).

**In order to identify and help the young people who are being victimized by a boyfriend or girlfriend, the scientists suggest that pediatricians and health care providers of adolescents should ask their caregivers if they are aware of any dating violence they are involved in.** This way, the victims can immediately get involved in prevention programs and receive treatment.

Written by Sarah Glynn

#### References

*Longitudinal Associations Between Teen Dating Violence Victimization and Adverse Health Outcomes*

Deinera Exner-Cortens, John Eckenrode, and Emily Rothman

*Pediatrics* December 10, 2012; doi: 10.1542/peds.2012-1029

#### Additional information

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# KNOW YOUR IX

Empowering students to stop sexual violence



## Title IX for High School Students

**TITLE IX PROTECTS  
HIGH SCHOOL  
SURVIVORS, TOO.**

### About This Toolkit

Rape doesn't just happen in college. K-12 students suffer sexual and dating violence too. Student survivors who attend public schools, and other schools that receive federal funding, are protected by a 1972 civil rights law called Title IX. In brief, Title IX requires schools to act to prevent violence before it occurs (through, for instance, training and educational programming) and to respond to it after the fact, to remedy its impact (through, for instance, free counseling, academic accommodations, and other support services).

On this site, you can find information on high school student survivors' legal rights, schools' legal obligations, and resources and tools for accessing support, including:

- **A primer** on what gender violence is, what your legal options are, and resources for seeking additional support (this page; scroll down!)
- **Title IX Basics**: a summary of nine key Title IX protections for high school students and survivors
- **Answers to frequently asked legal questions**, like, "Is what I tell people confidential?" and "Does Title IX protect me if I was assaulted at home, on the bus, or online?"
- **A guide to accessing restraining orders** as a high school student survivor
- **A guide on asking for support** as a high school student survivor — and, for teachers, family members, and friends — a how-to on providing it
- **A guide on finding a pro bono lawyer**



## A Few Notes

- If you're a survivor, know that what you've experienced, or are experiencing, is not your fault. No one has the right to touch your body in ways that make you feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or in pain. And no one — including a boyfriend, girlfriend, teacher, parent, relative, or friend — should tease, taunt, manipulate, or hurt you. If they do, it's not your fault; it's *theirs*. Know too that you're not alone. 44% of survivors of sexual assault are under the age of 18.
- Like all our resources, this section of the site is growing. Accordingly, please don't hesitate to send us feedback, additions, and suggestions. We're particularly looking for resources on how to organize by and for high school student activists, as well as case studies on past organizing struggles and successes. Email us at knowyourIX [at] gmail [dot] com.

## A Brief Primer

### What is sexual assault, or gender violence?

Gender-based violence is a harmful act(s) committed against a person because of their gender or sex. People of all genders and sexual orientations may experience such violence or harassment. The ACLU has a helpful [fact sheet](#) to help you identify behaviors that may constitute gender-based violence or harassment. As the ACLU points out, these behaviors may be carried out by a boyfriend or girlfriend, a date, other classmates, friends, parents, guardians, family members, teachers, or other adults; and can include:

- following you around, always wanting to know where you are and who you are with, or stalking you
- pressuring you to perform sexual acts
- touching you sexually against your will
- interfering with your birth control
- verbally abusing you using anti-gay or sex-based insults
- hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, or choking you
- verbally or physically threatening you
- attempting or forcing you to have oral, vaginal, or anal sex
- sending you repeated and unwanted texts, online messages, and/or phone calls, including (but not limited to) sexual comments
- making repeated sexual comments about you to other classmates, including through Facebook groups, Yik Yak, or on Instagram
- sharing naked photos of you with classmates without your permission

Know that if you are in a dating or sexual relationship with someone who does some of the above, you may be experiencing intimate partner violence (also called "dating violence" or "domestic violence"), which is another

form of gender-based violence. Dating violence is not always (or even often) physical or sexual. Learn the signs [here](#).

It is up to you whether or not you decide to name your experience as violence or harassment. If you have questions about what you experienced, you can visit [these pages](#) for help, or call the sexual assault hotline (1-800-656-4673).

## What are my legal options?

If you were sexually assaulted, abused, and/or harassed and are a student at a school that receives federal funds (any public elementary, middle, or high school, or college; and most private colleges), you have three primary legal options, of which you can choose to do none, one, two, or all three. You can proceed through:

### A Title IX process at your school

Learn your Title IX rights [here](#), and see answers to frequently asked questions [here](#).

In brief: you can choose to:

- File a formal complaint against your perpetrator, which will trigger an investigation and, potentially, disciplinary action for the person who harassed, assaulted, or abused you, as well as accommodations and remedies (like counseling services, academic tutoring, class changes, or extensions on exams) for you; OR
- Ask only for particular accommodations and remedies, without needing to make a formal complaint against your perpetrator.

Regardless of your choice, this is an administrative process that takes place entirely within your school; it does not involve the criminal legal system. **However, if you are under 18, and experienced certain kinds of violence (e.g., rape, sexual assault, or physical abuse), school officials may be required to disclose your case to the police, which could trigger a criminal (outside of the school) investigation.** More information on this concern is available in the [FAQ resource](#).

### A criminal complaint

If you report to the police, an investigator will likely meet with you and, in some circumstances, law enforcement or child protective services may need to inform your parent/guardian. Visit [RAINN](#) for more information.

### A civil law process



With the assistance of an attorney (and a parent or guardian if you are under 18), you may be able to file a civil lawsuit for damages against your perpetrator, although these are lengthy, expensive, and not often fruitful.

You can also file for a restraining order (also known as a civil protection order, personal protection order, harassment prevention order, or domestic violence abuse prevention order), which typically prohibits the person who hurt you from contacting — or even from coming into a certain distance as — you. Learn more about court-issued restraining orders [here](#) and [here](#).

## Other options and resources

### Talk to someone

Good people to talk to can include family, friends, a partner or significant other, a therapist or guidance counselor, or a teacher. Follow the links below to check out our tips on starting these conversations, as well as information on mandatory reporting obligations. Ask people you trust to help you develop a safety plan, as outlined [here at loveisrespect.org](#).

- [Talking to parents/guardians](#)
- [Talking to a friend](#)
- [Talking to a school therapist, guidance counselor, or teacher](#)
- [Talking to a partner or significant other \[coming soon\]](#)

### Seek medical care and mental health care

We'll publish a detailed guide soon but, in the meantime, check out RAINN's resources [here](#) and [here](#), and Planned Parenthood's resource [here](#).

### Free legal resources

- **Public Justice** (*on contingency fee basis*) represents bullying victims and their families, including victims of sexual assault and harassment, in lawsuits against school districts that failed to protect them. You and your family can contact the organization for legal assistance by phone at (202) 797-8600 or by email at [caseintake\[at\]publicjustice\[dot\]net](mailto:caseintake[at]publicjustice[dot]net).
- **The National Women's Law Center** is able to assist in filing Title IX complaints and lawsuits in limited circumstances. If the NWLC is unable to represent you, they may be able to help you find another attorney.
- **Equal Rights Advocates** is confidential and here to help you understand your legal rights. Contact ERA at 800-839-4372 or at its [online intake form](#).
- **The Victim Rights Law Center** assists victims in Massachusetts and Portland, OR. You can contact the

VRLC by phone at 617-399-6720 x19 or at their web address [here](#).

## Hotlines and online resources

- **The National Dating Abuse Helpline** — This helpline is designed for teens and young adults who have experienced abuse in a dating relationship.
- **RAINN's Online Hotline** — This free and confidential service provides services to survivors of sexual assault through an online chat function, instead of by phone.
- **The National Sexual Assault Hotline, 800-656-4673** — This free and confidential service provides services to survivors of sexual assault over the phone.
- **Not Alone: Together Against Sexual Assault** — This map allows you to locate services, resources, and advocates near you.
- **Surviving in Numbers** provides an anonymous and confidential space for survivors of all ages to share their experiences of sexual and domestic violence. In addition to raising awareness through story-sharing of the prevalence of violence, Surviving in Numbers also runs trainings for young folks, which focus on dismantling myths around sexual and dating violence, empowering students to be active bystanders while maintaining personal safety, learning how to best support peers who disclose being assaulted, and replacing victim-blaming language with positive ways to support survivors. If you want to share your story or bring Surviving in Numbers to your school, you can [visit their website](#) or [contact them](#).
- **Break the Cycle**, **Love Is Respect**, and **That's Not Cool** also have helpful resources for teen survivors of dating violence and sexual assault.

## Self-care

After an experience of violence, it is natural to feel a wide range of emotions. Practicing positive self-care can be helpful in managing emotional reactions to stress. Self-care involves intentionally building time into your day to take care of yourself emotionally and physically, and it is a critical component to healing in the aftermath of sexual assault or violence. Self-care can look different for everyone. Learn more [here](#).

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*The toolkit was written by Mahroh Jahangiri, Dana Bolger, Nina Gurak, and Iris Z., with feedback, guidance, and assistance from the Gender Violence Clinic at the University of Maryland Carey School of Law, Cari Simon, J.D., Ali Safran of [Surviving in Numbers](#), and various high school student survivors and activists. It is intended as a living, breathing document, so please don't hesitate to send feedback, suggestions, additions, etc., to us at [knowyourIX \[at\] gmail \[dot\] com](mailto:knowyourIX[at]gmail[dot]com).*

***We are not lawyers, and the information on this website does not constitute legal advice. We encourage you to [contact a lawyer](#) to discuss your complaint or suit.***



The Intersection between  
Intimate Partner Abuse,  
Technology, and Cybercrime  
*Examining the Virtual Enemy*

Edited by

Jordana N. Navarro

Shelly Clevenger

Catherine D. Marcum



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## Chapter Seven

# Sexting, Sextortion, and Other Internet Sexual Offenses

*Renee D. Lamphere and Kweilin T. Pikicimas*

## Introduction

The advancement of communication technologies such as the Internet, cell phones, and social networking sites has given individuals the tools to help establish and maintain interpersonal relationships (Herleim & Ancheta, 2014).

In addition to expediting communication between friends and family, these advancements in technology have also allowed for increased accessibility and communication with individuals one may have romantic interests in. While this increased means of romantic communication is certainly more convenient than ever before, it has also created an opportunity for new types of behaviors, including sexual and aggressive acts (Marganski & Faulb, 2013).

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss sexual offenses on the Internet (and other related technologies) involving intimate partners. In particular, it will describe the offenses of sexting, revenge pornography, sextortion, online romantic/dating frauds, and catfishing. A history, discussion of relevant literature, and current issues are included for each of the mentioned offenses. Specific focus will be given to the victimization aspect of these offenses, as it is important to understand the unique circumstance that Internet-based victims face.

## Sexting

### *What Is Sexting?*

While the term can have many meanings, in general, sexting refers to the sharing of sexually explicit content via mobile phone or device (Weins, 2014).



a nude or semi-nude image (Mitchell, Finkelhor, Jones, & Wolak, 2012). This led some to conclude that sexting is not problematic behavior among youth (Lampshire, 2014).

More recent research has used other research design techniques in an attempt to obtain more accurate results on youth sexting. In 2010, Hinduja & Patchin furthered the sexting literature by surveying 4,400 students ages 11 to 18 in a large public school district. The results showed that 12.9 percent reported receiving a naked or semi-naked image and 7.7 percent reported sending such images (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Dake and colleagues' (2012) school-based research involved 1,289 middle and high school participants from 35 school districts in a Midwestern state. Of these participants, 17 percent reported sending or receiving sext messages (Dake, Price, Maziarz, & Ward, 2012).

Current research on sexting is looking to expand beyond prevalence rates alone to examine the correlates and motivational factors for sexting. For example, Martinez-Prather & Vandiver (2014) recently examined sexting under the framework of Cohen & Felson's (1979) routine activities theory, testing for the three major elements of the theory: motivated offender, suitable target, and absence of capable guardian. Approximately one-third of the 378 college freshman respondents reported sending a nude or semi-nude photo to someone else while in high school. Also, spending time with friends in an unsupervised setting (i.e., absence of capable guardian) resulted in youth being significantly more likely to report sexting (Martinez-Prather & Vandiver, 2014). Reynolds and colleagues (2014) explored the relationship between self-control and opportunity. Drawing on elements of routine activities theory (Felson & Cohen, 1979) and the general theory of crime (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), 1,929 college-age sophomores, juniors, and seniors were surveyed via Internet survey about their participation in sexting under these theoretical perspectives. Of the 5 percent who reported sending nude or semi-nude images it was found that low self-control is significantly and positively related to sexting behavior, and lifestyles and routine activities had a moderate mediating effect on self-control (Reynolds, Henson, & Fisher, 2014). It is suggested that future research should move beyond exploring prevalence rates alone and explore sexting and its correlates from a variety of theoretical frameworks (Benotsch, Snipes, Martin, & Bull, 2013; Lounsbury, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2011).

### *Female vs. Male Sexting*

In addition to the variations between studies, there is also variation within studies regarding the prevalence of sexting in reference to the gender of the study participant. A number of studies reveal no significant gender differences

in terms of frequency of sexting (Benotsch et al., 2013; Dake et al., 2012; Lenhart et al., 2009; NCPTUP, 2008). Of the studies that do find a gender effect, the results indicate that females are more likely than males to be the sender of sext messages (Associated Press, 2009; Cox Communication, 2009; Englander, 2012; Reynolds et al., 2014). For example, the Cox Communication (2009) study found that girls were more likely to be sext senders than boys (65% girls vs. 35% boys). Recent research by Reynolds and colleagues (2014) found that females were 5 times more likely to be the sender of a sext message.

In looking for an explanation for the difference between gender and the rate of sending a sext message, Englander (2012) further explored this relationship. This study looked at sext-senders from two perspectives, those who sent a message of their own free will, and those who were coerced or pressured into doing so. The gendered difference is only found in the case of coercive sexting, as females were more likely to report feeling pressured to send a sext message. In fact, coercion to sext is twice as common among girls as it is boys, with over half of all female sexting attributed to coercion or pressure from another party (Englander, 2012). Given the varied nature of these results it is apparent that more inquiry is necessary to understand the relationship between gender and sexting.

### *The Legal Consequences of Sexting*

Prior to discussing the potential legal consequences of sexting, it is important to note that the actual act of sexting is not illegal in and of itself. Using sexual communication to express intimacy is a common practice among adults (Shafro-Perez, 2009). Despite arguments that it may be viewed as an obscene act, it is nonetheless a protected act by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution (Wastler, 2010). It is the age of the person who creates, possesses, and distributes a sext that makes the action illegal (Halloran-McLaughlin, 2014). While there are many potential avenues for responding to youth sexting, the chosen response is often formal sanctioning via the criminal justice system (Willis & Hedward, 2014).

One of the central debates surrounding youth participation in sexting is whether these images fall within the realm of current child pornography statutes (Wastler, 2010). Beginning with the enactment of *The Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation Act* in 1977, and continuing with many laws passed since, specific behaviors such as possessing, selling, receiving, sending, or transmission of child pornography have been deemed illegal (Richards & Calvert, 2009). Child pornography statutes are intended to prevent children from being sexually exploited, violated, and manipulated by adults (Corbett, 2009; Wastler, 2010). However, in the circumstances of youth sexting, the persons



the public online without the consent of the pictured individual (Arnold, 2014). Revenge porn has also been defined as “a form of sexual assault that involves the distribution of nude/sexually explicit photos and/or videos of an individual without their consent” (Webb, 2014). Pornographic websites that serve this purpose often feature “explicit photos by ex-boyfriends, ex-husbands and ex-lovers, often accompanied by disparaging descriptions and identifying details” (Goode, 2013; Peterson, 2013). Research indicates that a large majority of the revenge pornography sites feature “selfies” or amateur photos taken by the victims themselves. That is, often images are taken voluntarily by the victim but are forwarded to revenge porn sites by disgruntled ex-lovers or former sexual partners who did not seek consent from the victim to do so (Goode, 2013).

In a study recently published by the *Cyber Civil Rights Initiative*, researchers found that a large majority (90%) of victims in revenge porn cases were women. Most victims (93%) reported that they had experienced a significant amount of emotional distress because of their victimization. Moreover, half of the victims (49%) reported that they were harassed or stalked by people who followed the pornographic site that they were featured on (Webb, 2014).

### History of Revenge Porn

Websites and blogs dedicated to the revenge porn genre began to appear on the Internet as early as 2000. Around the same time, Sergio Messina was credited for first introducing the *realcore pornography* genre, which was the sharing of photos and/or videos of ex-girlfriends in shared online groups. Several years later, more pornographic websites that featured user-submitted images emerged, including *XTube*, *realexgirlfriends.com*, and *iknowthatgirl.com* (Tsoulis-Reay, 2013). In 2010, revenge porn gained national media attention following the creation of *IsAnyoneUp.com*. This website boasted the use of pornography for spiteful purposes, principally revenge porn. The creator, Hunter Moore, a 25-year-old man from Sacramento, California, began the website which featured sexually explicit photos, a link to the person in the photo's Facebook, Twitter, and/or Tumblr, as well as personal information about the person. The site allowed anonymous submissions of photos of any person to its database, and at one point it had reached a rate of over 30 million views per month (Gold, 2011; Zelmer, 2011).

In April of 2011 the web address for *Is Anyone Up?* was sold to an anti-bullying charity *BullyVille* (Neil, 2014; Vaas, 2014). Moore was eventually indicted on charges of conspiracy, email hacking, and aggravated identity theft (Neil, 2014; Tsoulis-Reay, 2013). Unfortunately, other websites much like Moore's still exist on the Internet today. Much like Moore's sentiment that vic-

tims are deserving of the abuse, other moderators have excused their websites, stating that they serve only as “entertainment” (Peterson, 2013).

### Criminalization of Revenge Porn

Revenge porn has become hugely problematic in the past few years, and victims are not often protected by legislation (Stebnat, 2013). There are currently 13 states in the U.S. that have passed laws against revenge porn (Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, and Wisconsin). Other states are close behind. This year, revenge porn bills were introduced or are pending in at least 28 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2014). Victims are becoming involved as well and have been petitioning against revenge porn, using avenues such as *EndRevengePorn.org*, an initiative that was first introduced by Dr. Holly Jacobs, a victim of revenge porn (End Revenge Porn, 2014).

Revenge porn can be seen as a form of misogynistic abuse that is “normalized in the online space” (Edwards, 2014), and there is a link between domestic partner violence and revenge porn. *Cyber Civil Rights* (2014) estimates that 1 in 10 ex-partners have made threats that they would expose photos of their ex online, with 60 percent actually carrying through with the behavior (Webb, 2014). Revenge porn can cut across same-sex, as well as heterosexual, couples, and can be done by the female to the male as much as the other way round. However, research indicates that victims of revenge porn are mostly women (Edwards, 2014; Webb, 2014).

Eliminating sexually explicit material that is posted on the Internet poses challenges and, because of the proliferation of means to communicate, the amount of damage the victim can experience is significant. The process of criminalizing revenge porn is slow-moving and legalities are often found to hinder the process further, yet victims are still vehemently demanding change (Marcotte, 2014). Revenge porn has devastating consequences for those who are targeted.

### Sextortion

Another new crime that has emerged from the increase in technology that characterizes today's society is *Sextortion*. This is a form of sexual exploitation in which non-physical intimidation is used in the coercion of sexual favors from victims. There is no universal definition for sextortion, but the term has been applied to cybercrimes that involve the posting of sexually explicit material on the Internet to blackmail former intimate partners. Sextortion involves the stealing of photos or videos, usually by hacking an individual's computer,



has become extremely proactive in searching for predators, having recently arrested over 250 predators that engaged in online sexual abuse and possessed, produced, or traded pornography (Gross & Arkin, 2014). However, ultimately, more research will need to be done in this area regarding the prevalence and frequency of sextortion. Further, legislation that addresses the specific crime of sextortion may be of use in the future, as much of this behavior is not illegal by current standards.

### Online Dating/Romance Scams

The Internet has now made it possible for a person to date without ever leaving their home. The use of internet dating sites, social networking sites, and dating applications has enabled humans to date 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (Rege, 2009). With the growth in popularity of online dating in the past twenty years has come a growth in both the numbers and revenues of online dating websites (Close & Zinkhan, 2004). There are over 1,400 dating sites in North America alone (Rege, 2009), which are estimated to generate \$2 to \$4 billion in revenue annually (Hamm, 2014; Rogers, 2013). Popular sites such as Match.com, eHarmony.com, Chemistry.com, and OKCupid.com make it easy for individuals to meet potential online matches (Rege, 2009). Online dating is not limited to dating sites only, as social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have generated a new method of connecting with others who may share similar interests (Worham, 2014).

Recent research by Smith & Duggan (2014) in conjunction with the Pew Research Internet Project echoes the trend towards online dating, with 1 in 10 Americans reporting using online dating sites or mobile dating applications. In regard to social networking sites (SNS), 31 percent of respondents reported using these sites to check up on someone they used to date or be in a relationship with and 15 percent asked someone out on a date using an SNS (Smith & Duggan, 2014). While the majority of people who go online to date do not experience major difficulties, it is an industry that has faced a number of problems, particularly the emergence of dating/romance scams (Rege, 2009).

While the exact origin of online dating/romance scams is unknown, its roots can be traced back to the mid-2000s (Whitty & Buchanan, 2012). Although these scams can manifest in a number of ways, there are commonalities among them. The typical anatomy of an online dating/romance scam goes as follows: the criminal (scammer) often initiates contact with their victim through a dating or social networking site (Buchanan & Whitty, 2014; Rege, 2009). The offender, whose profile is often created with stolen photographs, will declare

their affection and/or love for the victim at an early stage and will seek to move the communication from the dating site or SNS to other forms of communication (Whitty, 2013). The communication between the scammer and the victim is described as being both frequent and intense and builds over a period of weeks, months, or even years (Buchanan & Whitty, 2014).

After a trusting relationship is established, the scammer will begin with requests for small amounts of money or gifts. Buchanan and Whitty (2014) refer to this as a "testing-the-water" strategy, where the scammer is looking to see if the victim grants their request. The small requests often quickly accelerate into requests for larger sums of money. The scammer may bring in a third party to assist in the scam to make the monetary appeals more realistic. For example, a third party may contact the victim and explain that the scammer is "ill" or has been in an "accident" and requires money to make payment on a hospital bill, capitalizing on the feelings of empathy the victim has developed for the scammer (Rege, 2009; Whitty & Buchanan, 2012). For most victims, the online dating/romance scam ends when the victim both realizes and accepts that he or she has been scammed and refuses to pay the scammer (Whitty, 2013). Unfortunately for many victims, when they do decide to come forward there is often little room for recourse regarding these actions (Rege, 2009). While the FBI does offer warning about online dating/romance scams (FBI, 2012), beyond this there is little assistance for victims of this crime (Rege, 2009).

To date, there is little information regarding the typical characteristics of victims for these types of scams (Buchanan & Whitty, 2014). Rege (2009) asserts that romance scams are gender neutral in that males and females are targeted equally. While there are no reported differences between male and female victimization, it is believed that the most common targets for online dating/romance scammers are women over the age of 40 who are divorced, widowed, and/or disabled (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2012). Buchanan and Whitty (2014) hypothesize that there may be feelings and characteristics that are common among victims. For example, those who experience extreme feelings of loneliness may tend to form strong attachments and relationships on the Internet, increasing their chance of victimization. Another hypothesis is that those individuals who are high sensation seekers looking for new, complex, intense sensations may be willing to risk their financial and emotional well-being to achieve these sensations (Buchanan & Whitty, 2014).

Whitty (2013) interviewed twenty individuals who had been victims of online dating/romance scams. The sample consisted of 14 heterosexual women, 4 heterosexual men, and 2 homosexual men. Many of these victims had been scammed for money, one person repeatedly (over 40 times). One of the themes that emerged was that many victims felt the person who scammed them por-



presented providing, details of both the offenders and victims of these sexually based offenses. Technology allows for an overabundance of means in which individuals, particularly intimate partners, can be victimized. Technology will continue to evolve, allowing for more ways to communicate and send images to one another. For this reason, it is suggested that Internet users be aware of what they are doing online. Further, it is suggested that youth and adults protect themselves by avoiding sending explicit images to others via technology and making sure that they know who they are conversing with online. Additional research on the cyber-victimization and perpetration of the crimes discussed in this chapter is needed. Future efforts should consider cybercrime as it relates to males as well as females, and should attempt to examine the long-term effects of online victimization.

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## 4. Title: Healthy and Unhealthy Relationship Cards Activity

### **Program: Circle**

**Age Levels:** 12 and up

**Appropriate for:** Classrooms, support and educational groups

**Describe Audience:** Middle through High School students in classrooms or small groups

**Objective:** To encourage participants to discern between characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships, see the confusing and blurry lines, and dialogue about it.

### **Activity Description:**

- **How much time needed:** 1-1.5 hours is best; can be modified to be shorter
- **Materials Needed:** Premade Healthy Relationship Cards
- **Supporting Material:** List of Healthy Relationship Cards, p. 152

### **Instructions:**

**In the class room setting, this activity follows:** Introductions, Review of program services, and definition of domestic/ dating violence, including reference to the gendered aspects of the issue.

- Split the class into three or four groups, depending on class size. Be sure to include a mix of boys and girls in each group.
- Create three columns on the blackboard labeled “Healthy,” “Both” and “Unhealthy”
- Pass out a deck of Healthy/Unhealthy cards to each group. Ensure that each group receives a mix of healthy, both, and unhealthy relationship characteristics/behaviors.
- Ask the group to separate their cards into 3 piles (healthy, both, unhealthy). Make clear that if one person disagrees, the card should go into “both”. Ask students to think about their responses and be prepared to explain the decisions that they made. There are no right answers!
- Come back together as a large group. Ask one group to share, one at a time, their “unhealthy” cards. Continue to each group, then ask groups to share their “both” and their “healthy”. I like to end on “healthy” just to end positively. The downside to this is that if you are short on time, you have to rush through the good stuff!

- Lists will be different each time, but for certain characteristics, like “possessive”, shouldn’t be in both. Listen to their perspective, explain why “possessive” is always unhealthy in a relationship, and move the card.
- Engage all members of the class in a discussion about each card. Ask: “Why did you put this card here?” “Can you think of a time when this might happen in a healthy (unhealthy) relationship?” “Can you give an example of this behavior?” “Why is that unhealthy?”
- Using hypothetical situations or telling anonymous stories from my experience in work with offenders and victim/survivors often helps draw students into the conversation.
- Many of the cards offer an opportunity to explore aspects of domestic violence. For example, when “cruelty to animals” comes up, I often ask “If we’re talking about relationships between people, why is this card here?” When “Friendship” comes along, we explore the warning sign of committing too quickly to a relationship, and discuss the importance of getting to know each other and friendship in an intimate relationship.



## Healthy Relationship Cards

*The list that follows is an example of how the activity can turn out. Things are different every time, for example some students put "fun" in the "both" column and explain that some people have fun by doing scary things or harassing other people*

### **Healthy/Unhealthy Cards:**

#### **Healthy** **(Equality)**

Safe Sex  
Fun  
Respect  
Responsibility  
Compromise  
Honesty  
Communication  
Friendship  
Trust  
Support  
Independent Decision  
Making

#### **Both**

Strength  
Jealousy  
Silence  
Protection  
Anger  
Love  
Complaining

#### **Unhealthy** **(Power/Control)**

Possessiveness  
Threats  
Telling you what to  
wear  
Name Calling  
Insulting friends and  
family  
Minimizing  
Blame and accusations  
Manipulation  
Cruelty to Animals  
Guilt Trip

# Building teen dating violence education into the curriculum

**Teacher's Guide:** Interesting, Fun, and Effective Classroom Activities to Influence Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention<sup>8</sup>

## Suggested Classroom Activities

### **Web Page Design Class, Computer Applications Class, Desktop Publishing Class, or Video Productions Class**

- Depending on skill level and software availability, have students develop an interactive game, quiz, or automatic slide show/presentation dealing with teen dating violence awareness. (This can be done in anything from custom-animated PowerPoint to basic programming/authoring tools.) Consider setting the finished product up in the cafeteria as a kiosk and encourage students "test" themselves to see how much they know about the topic.
- Have your students incorporate their skills into producing something to raise awareness about teen dating violence. Depending on their skill level, students could create brochures to be placed in the school office, restrooms and locker rooms; an announcement could be aired in the school television broadcast system; or a web page could be featured on the school's website. Check out [thesafespace.org](http://thesafespace.org) for ideas.

### **Math Class**

- Help students to develop an anonymous school survey that will measure their peers' attitudes and behaviors concerning dating relationships. After administering the survey, compile the results and calculate the probability that a student in the school will be a victim (or perpetrator) of teen dating violence. Present your findings to your school administration, school board, or parent group.
- Work with your students to develop an anonymous school survey that will measure their peers' attitudes and behaviors concerning dating relationships. Data from the survey can be used to practice additional skills such as:
  - > measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode)
  - > graphing data in a variety of forms
  - > applying probability ratios to different populations (i.e. school, city, state, country) to determine the number of people affected; for example, if there is a probability that 1 in 5 teens will be a victim of dating violence, how many teens will be affected in your state? Population estimates for city, county, state, and country can be found at Census Quick Facts, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>

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<sup>8</sup> © 2006 American Bar Association NATIONAL TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE





### **Government/Citizenship Class**

- Have the students role-play a debate between state legislators. They can pretend they are debating in one of the chambers of your Capitol Building, or on a television political news show. Applying their knowledge of state law and policy, the students should debate the following topic: "Teens should (or should not) have the ability to file their own protective orders in a violent teen dating relationship."
- Applying your state statutes, conduct a "mock trial" of a teen dating violence case. Assign students to act in the roles of the judge, the prosecuting attorney, the victim's attorney, the accused and the victim. The judge and attorneys must integrate the state statutes into their individual courtroom roles: during the attorney's opening and closing arguments; as the judge presides over the courtroom scene; and during the questioning of the victim and accused. Let the remaining students act as the jury and deliberate innocence or guilt.
- Help your students make a formal request that local government leaders proclaim "Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week" in your area. Have a group of students be present during the official proclamation signing. Invite the news media to cover the event, or submit a news release. Note: National "Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week" is the first full week of February.
- Discuss the role of citizens as activists and agents of change, particularly in the area of youth/teen advocacy and relationship violence prevention. As a class, identify an opportunity to influence change, such as:
  - > Volunteer or participate in a local event to show support of teen dating violence prevention.
  - > Hold a bake sale, car wash, etc. to raise money to donate to an organization that addresses teen dating violence prevention.
- Research relevant laws in your state and in other states. Write a letter to your senator expressing support for a specific issue related to the law and teen dating violence prevention.
- Have students review existing school policies concerning sexual harassment and dating and sexual violence. Discuss whether additional policies are needed to protect students who have been targets of these behaviors. They may wish to put their thoughts in writing in the form of a proposal to the school administrator or school board. Talk to Break the Cycle for a sample school policy.





### **Drama or Theater Class**

- Assist students to enact a mock teen dating violence incident, demonstrating how violent behavior escalates. Include the roles that friends, family, teachers, bystanders and others may play in these situations. Include community groups in the enactment as appropriate. Follow-up with a discussion about what occurred. Discuss the obligation of all those involved, as well as school safety issues and strategies.
- Invite your students to create a dramatic scene in which they confront a friend who is in an abusive relationship or a friend who is treating a boyfriend or girlfriend in a hurtful or disrespectful manner. Bring in a local teen dating or domestic violence organization representative to discuss different approaches.
- Through discussion or debate, ask students to investigate whether “Romeo and Juliet” was a “great love story” or “a compelling story of love addiction.” Have students write a summary essay supporting their decision. Identify other plays, movies, or musicals that depict healthy or unhealthy relationships.
- Have your students use improvisational acting skills to interview a potential boyfriend or girlfriend before going out on a date with them. Discuss what kinds of questions they would ask to determine whether their potential date will be respectful.
- Have your students role play behaviors that are warning signs of an abusive relationship. See [thesafespace.org](http://thesafespace.org) for warning signs.

### **Family/Consumer Science Class**

- Have your students perform research to find local professionals and organizations that can provide intervention services for a teenager who believes they are in a violent or potentially violent relationship. Have them report the results back to the entire class and submit a summary to the campus newspaper.
- Bring a representative from an appropriate community organization into the classroom to talk about teen dating violence and discuss services specific to teen dating violence. Your students could submit a short story and a list of services to the high school campus newspaper.
- Study the relationship between spousal abuse and child abuse. What are the effects of domestic violence on children? What similar factors are associated with dating violence perpetration?





### **Art Class**

- Using a life-size human shape, along with cut-outs from butcher paper and a variety of specific selection of materials (e.g. fabrics, yarns, papers, markers, clay, chalk, etc.), have students creatively and artistically create a visual representation of a person involved in a violent relationship vs. a person involved in a healthy relationship. Place them in a school location where they can be seen by other students and school personnel. Have the artists write a description to display with their artwork.
- Divide the class into pairs or groups and assign each pair/group a door in the school. Conduct a "Healthy Relationships" door decorating contest! To encourage student body awareness/participation, the student body can vote on their favorite door.
- Make a collage with pictures and words to illustrate the messages teens hear and see about intimate relationships in the media, music, from parents, and peers, to illustrate healthy vs. abusive relationships, or to illustrate what they want from a partner in a healthy relationship.

### **Health Science Class**

- Discuss relationship violence, the spectrum of violence (physical, social, emotional, psychological, verbal) and the continuum of violence. Have the students research the associated health problems beforehand. Conduct a class discussion about the adverse health effects of a violent teenage dating relationship, such as eating disorders, depression, suicide, unwanted sex, sexually transmitted disease, pregnancy, etc.
- Create a survey to anonymously and randomly survey the student body regarding their experience or awareness of the problem of relationship violence on the campus. Ask health-related questions in your anonymous survey. For example, one question might be, "Have you been in a violent or controlling dating relationship?" and a follow-up question might be, "If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, did your experience cause real or potential health problems, such as feelings of depression, thoughts of suicide, disordered eating behaviors, drug or alcohol use? Please explain." Report the results back to the class and submit an article to the campus newspaper.
- Research and discuss why domestic violence is considered a major public health problem. Ask your students if any of the health concerns are also associated with teen dating violence. Talk about which strategies are considered most effective in preventing domestic violence from a public health perspective, and if any might also apply to teen dating violence prevention.



## English Class

- Hold a class discussion or debate addressing whether "Romeo and Juliet" is a 'great love story' or 'a compelling story of love addiction.' Have your students write a summary essay supporting their position.
- Have your students write a comparative paper discussing, 'how it feels to be loved' versus 'how it feels to be controlled.' Have the class discuss their views.
- Using [thesafespace.org](http://thesafespace.org), ask your students to define "teen dating violence."
- Challenge your students to write an article for the school or community newspaper on the issue of teen dating violence and prevention. Have the work judged by a panel of local journalists. Ask that the winning article be highlighted during the National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week or immediately afterward.
- Ask your students to read and analyze reports from newspapers and websites about dating violence and discuss how these stories are told. What words are used to describe acts of dating violence?
- Invite students to interview one or more older relatives or neighbors about dating customs and beliefs in the past. They might tape-record the interview, with permission, and write a report about what they learned.
- Ask your class to write poetry about the meaning of love, respect, friendship or other topics.
- Have the students read an article on teen dating violence or relationship violence and complete the following assignment:

## Sample Assignment Sheet

- State the topic.
- Write a citation for your article.
- **Write a short article summarization.**
- **State the article's main facts and opinions.**
  - > Paraphrase one example of each.
  - > Draw an inference from the facts. (Do not just paraphrasing the facts.)
- **Write 2-4 sentences about the article's 'tone.'** (the author's attitude toward his subject).
  - > Quote words or phrases from the article which set the tone.
- **Develop your vocabulary**
  - > Choose two words from the article that you did not know previously.
  - > For each of the words, quote a sentence from the article that uses them.
  - > Write what you think each word's definition is, based on context. (Use your knowledge of roots and prefixes to determine the 'best guess' definition.)
  - > Write the dictionary definition of each word.
  - > Write your own sentence(s) using the words.



- Around the topic of “teen dating violence,” have your students practice using their research skills, including:
  - Collecting background research (5 sources).
  - Applying experimental design skills, use a survey to conduct an experiment. For example, ask questions like the following:
    - > Does the gender of the interviewer and interviewee affect survey results?
    - > Do responses vary based on whether the survey is conducted one-on-one or in a group setting?
    - > Does the social context setting affect survey responses (e.g. if the survey is conducted in the boys locker room after PE vs. in science or math class)?
      - Develop a hypothesis.
      - Identify dependent and independent variables.
      - Conduct research.
      - Analyze the data.
      - Develop a conclusion and a discussion.

### **History Class**

- Assign students to research the historical timeline and social views of domestic violence, from when it was a “private family matter” to when it became a crime. Direct them to look at what occurred during those transitions, and to discuss in their paper any similarities to the current issue of teen dating violence. They should include information on legal statutes, and close with their summary of the findings, including their own opinion. Have students present their papers and discuss their findings and opinions.
- Ask the class to analyze the history of the Constitution in terms of power structures and equal rights (e.g. from land-owning, white men to women, minorities, etc.) and the role of the legal system in influencing change. Discuss some of the ‘teen rights’ your students think are important in today’s society. Students should consider how history might or might not determine opportunities to exercise those rights.

### **Physical Education Class**

- Invite presenters to the class to discuss personal safety issues, including how to respond to direct physical violence in a personal relationship. Include self-protection strategies, as appropriate.
- Assist your students to plan a dance to celebrate healthy relationships. Select music that promotes equality, respect, and other aspects of healthy relationships. Decorate with positive images of relationships. Give a prize to an individual or couple who demonstrates respect for others and each other.
- Plan a school-wide or community ‘walk’ with your students to honor those who have suffered or lost their lives or loved ones to teen dating violence. Students can use the walk to raise awareness and raise money to support a local service provider or to support prevention projects, resources and events on campus.



## General

- Assign teams of students to research local, state and/or national facts and statistics about teen dating violence. They should also research and provide information on preventive or intervention services. Applying their findings, allow them to develop brochures, informational flyers, web pages, newsletters, posters, public service announcements and/or commercials to promote awareness and prevention. Make sure the students' work is posted or distributed within the school and/or community.
- Have your students create posters on teen dating violence facts and prevention. Hang the posters in a visible area of the school, such as the student commons area or the hallway near the main entrance.
- Help the students prepare an informational community presentation, on teen dating violence. Assist them to deliver it to other high schools, parent groups, teacher organizations, and community forums. Encourage them to define and describe "dating," "violence" and "dating violence." They can also address what the difference is between "acceptable" and "unacceptable" dating behavior. Assist them to look for other opportunities to present this information to the public.
- Encourage students to use teen dating violence as a topic for local, state and national speech, drama, or essay competitions.
- Ask your class to watch a TV program or movie about a couple's relationship. During the next class, have the students give a short description of the relationship and how the people treated each other, particularly if there was violent, aggressive, or controlling behavior. Then have the class discuss the influence TV and movies might have on their own ideas about relationships. Did the TV program or movie depict how they see themselves in a relationship or not? Give them the opportunity to discuss what is acceptable behavior and what is not.





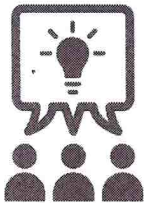
<https://www.breakoutedu.com/about>

## **Breakout EDU is the immersive learning games platform.**

**The Breakout EDU kit allows for the facilitation of games where players use teamwork and critical thinking to solve a series of challenging puzzles in order to open the locked box. Games are available for all ages and content areas.**

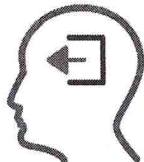
### **THE POWER OF BREAKOUT EDU**

#### **ACTIVE LEARNING**



Breakout EDU games transfer the ownership of learning from the instructor to the student, making it easy to observe how learners approach problem solving and apply their knowledge.

#### **THE FOUR Cs**



In addition to the content knowledge needed to succeed in a specific game, all Breakout EDU games require critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication.

#### **CULTIVATING GRIT**



A Breakout EDU game provides learners with many opportunities to fail forward. Every unsuccessful attempt to open a lock forces the player to try again.

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS BREAKOUT BOX

*still need to make the following into some sort of puzzle for the breakout box, but focusing on content for now*

*crossword, word search, maze, cryptogram or secret code, map coordinates, make poster with specific letters emphasized*

*types of locks*

*direction, alpha/word, 3 digit, 4 digit, padlock*

## PUZZLES/TASKS/WORKSHEETS...

### SOCIAL MEDIA

*crossword or word search for word lock or digit lock*

You MIGHT be abusing social media if:

you spend over an hour each day digitally communicating with your friend or significant other

your device gets lost, stolen or broken and you feel totally lost, abandoned and isolated

you expect your friend or significant other to respond to your messages immediately

you jump to conclusions about what your friend or significant other is doing if they don't respond quickly to your messages

you post pictures of others without their permission

you post pictures of yourself or ask others for pictures that would embarrass your grandmother

you send messages to others that you would never say to their face

you say or post something that might interfere with you getting a job or scholarship in the future

you can't turn your device off while you are at work or at school

you spend so much time on your device that it interferes with your chores, homework, and family time

you must have your device present even when you are eating a birthday or holiday meal with others

you take your device to the bathroom so you won't miss a message.

If you checked more than \_\_\_\_ of these boxes, you may be a slave to your technology. You are supposed to be the master of your technology and use it as a tool. It should enhance your life, not dictate it. YOU are in control of YOU. Do you need to make a change?



## **RELATIONSHIP RED FLAGS**

*crossword or word search for word lock or digit lock*

- Spending so much time with a friend or significant other that family and other friends feel neglected.
- Someone else dictates appropriate clothing.
- Constantly in contact through social media.
- "Walking on eggshells" to avoid making a friend or significant other angry.
- Name-calling is a constant part of the relationship.
- Often feeling stupid, belittled, and devalued in someone's presence.
- Jealousy is an overwhelming concern.
- Doing things that make you feel uncomfortable out of fear of losing the friend or significant other.
- Trying to control what someone thinks, feels, or does.
- Making excuses for someone's behavior.
- Making up lies to explain bruises.
- Often feeling guilty or intimidated.
- Scared to be yourself in case someone would be upset.
- Showing off or bragging about friends or significant others to improve social standing.
- Asking for inappropriate pictures.

## CONSENT - IT'S SIMPLE AS TEA

*map coordinates for digit lock*

Watch the you tube video..... and fill in the blanks to the following statements. (underlined words will have blanks to be filled in to make the worksheet - could be matching)

1. Imagine instead of initiating sex, you are making them a cup of tea.
2. If they say they aren't sure they want a cup of tea, then you can make them one but don't make them drink it..
3. If they say no thank you, then don't make them tea at all.
4. Don't get annoyed at someone for not wanting tea.
5. They may want tea initially but then change their mind. Although that is annoying, they still do not have to drink the tea.
6. If they are unconscious, they do not want tea. Don't force them to drink it. Make sure they are safe.
7. If they become unconscious while drinking tea, take the tea away. Don't make them keep drinking it.
8. If someone wanted tea on Saturday, it doesn't mean they want tea again later, or all the time.
9. If you can understand how ludicrous it is to make someone drink tea when they don't want it, then you can understand it's the same with sex.
10. Whether it is tea or sex, consent is everything

Bottom line - make sure they SAY yes and don't change their mind. Not saying NO, does not mean YES!

So set your boundaries and communicate them early.

*(get picture of stick person and put grid over it like longitude and latitude. Then when students match the coordinates they determine below, they can figure out the digit lock)*  
*map coordinates:*

1. *annoyed, ludicrous =*
2. *initiating, mind =*
3. *make, time =*
4. *no, consent =*
5. *force, unconscious =*

*If you have a 3 digit lock, use the coordinates for the odd number ones. If you have a 4 digit lock, skip the coordinate for the 3rd one.*



## **BOUNDARIES POSTER**

*direction lock - make poster*

If you don't communicate your boundaries **RIGHT** away, your partner may be **LEFT** guessing how far you will go. That may leave you **UP** for a big surprise or **DOWN** in the dumps when your wishes aren't known. So it is **UP** to you to initiate this conversation early and don't get **DOWN** when it gets awkward.

## GENDER ROLES

(When this is answered and shown to the leader, they can receive the decoder for the victims cryptogram.)

Whose job is it? Each person on team must answer, but you not have to agree. Each person needs to use a different color of ink or symbol.

TASK	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH
wash the dishes			
do the laundry			
mow the yard			
change the oil in the car/truck			
paint the bedroom			
give children a bath			
make meals and snacks			
make the money			
pay the bills			
ask someone on a date			
open doors			
serve guests at a party			
clean up after a storm			
decide where to eat out			
play with children			
take children fishing			
clean the bathroom			
clean the garage			
get the groceries			
take the trash and recycling out			
buy furniture or electronics for the family			
buy the presents for birthdays and holidays			
make and send invitations for family gatherings, birthdays, etc.			
take children to childcare			
get a babysitter			

There is no right or wrong answer for this but agreeing with your significant other will greatly reduce conflicts and potential abuse.

What surprised your team regarding the answers?



## **VICTIMS**

*(will make this a secret code or cryptogram - must do gender roles worksheet to get the decoder - when answered they can get the padlock key from the leader)*

It is never the victims fault and they never deserve it. It doesn't matter if the other person was just joking, etc. Once the victim asks them to stop, they should have enough human decency to listen to the victim, and respect their wishes. No one deserves to feel insignificant or inferior.

# Hot Buttons



## DIRECTIONS

Hot buttons are things that make you irritated, angry, or enraged. They may be something other people do, think, or say. They may be something that others do to you, to others, or to themselves. Take a few minutes and think about what makes you angry. List some of your hot buttons below:

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

## Cues to Anger

### Immediate Anger

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### Pent-Up Anger

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



When a hot button has been pushed and I am feeling my personal cues to anger, I can calm down by:

Immediate Calming Strategies

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Later Calming Strategies

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

