
loveisrespect, National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
Student Council Toolkit
Dating Abuse Facts and Campaign Ideas for your School



love is respect V org

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

1-866-331-9474 1-866-331-8453 TTY

About the Helpline

In February 2007, loveisrespect, National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline launched in hopes of helping teens and young adults across the country with both dating abuse and healthy relationship questions. In addition to our phone helpline, we also offer a live, one-on-one chat to those who visit www.loveisrespect.org. Our phones and chats are answered by peer advocates - trained advocates usually between the ages of 16 and 25. Each day our advocates help teens, concerned friends, and parents by providing non-judgmental crisis intervention and safety planning.



Peer Advocates taking calls and chats



Dating Abuse Fact Sheet

1. Nearly 1 in 3 teens have been the victim of sexual abuse, physical abuse or threats of physical abuse by a boyfriend or girlfriend.¹
2. Nearly 80% of girls who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser.²
3. Nearly 1 in 3 teens have been victimized by the use of technology from a boyfriend or girlfriend.
4. 1 in 5 teens who have been in a serious relationship report being hit, slapped or pushed by a partner.³
5. 60% of teens know someone who has been the victim of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or threats of physical abuse by a boyfriend or girlfriend.⁴
6. Rates of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use are more than twice as high in girls who report physical or sexual dating abuse than in girls who report no abuse.⁵
7. 50% of youth reporting both dating violence and rape also reported attempting suicide.⁶
8. Violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, and adult re-victimization.⁷
9. Being physically or sexually abused leaves teen girls up to 6 times more likely to become pregnant and more than 2 times as likely to report an STD.⁸

¹ http://www.giverespect.org/assets/pdf/teen_dating_abuse_2009_key_topline_findings.pdf

² Children Now/Kaiser Permanente "National Poll on Kids Health and Safety," December 1995

³ <http://www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/dating-abuse-fast-facts/>

⁴ <http://www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/dating-abuse-fast-facts/>

⁵ <http://cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/datingviolence.htm>

⁶ D. M. Ackard, Minneapolis, MN, and D. Neumark-Sztainer, Division of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, *Date Violence and Date Rape Among Adolescents: Associations with Disordered Eating Behaviors and Psychological Health*, Child Abuse & Neglect, 26 455-473, (2002).

⁷ Silverman, J, Raj A, et al. 2001. *Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality*. JAMA. 286:572-579. Available at <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/286/5/572>.

⁸ Decker M, Silverman J, Raj A. 2005. *Dating Violence and Sexually Transmitted Disease/HIV Testing and Diagnosis Among Adolescent Females*. Pediatrics. 116: 272-276.

What Your Student Council Can Do

Raise Awareness in Your School

Know the Signs: Using butcher paper or poster board, create signs to hang around campus that contain statistics and information relevant to dating abuse, including the use of technology in dating abuse. Have students involved thinking of creative, appropriate ways to make the signs eye-catching. Smaller signs can be created by hand or on the computer to give to teachers to hang in places where space is more limited (e.g. bathroom stalls). Another option is using sidewalk chalk to write various information, statistics, and phrases in places on campus where foot traffic is common.⁹

You can use the fact sheet included in this toolkit, or find some facts of your own at the following sites:

- <http://www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/dating-abuse-fast-facts/>
- http://www.giverespect.org/assets/pdf/teen_dating_abuse_2009_key_topline_findings.pdf
- <http://cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/datingviolence.htm>
- <http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teendating/facts.pdf>

Teen Safety Cards: Prepare wallet-sized cards to distribute to students listing resources for dating abuse, technology abuse, and/or sexual assault. Look to include your local domestic violence program as a resource on the card. (For help in finding your local program, contact loveisrespect.) On the opposite side of the cards, provide lists in the format of “Love is...” and “Love isn’t...”. These cards can also include statistics on dating abuse.

Six of these cards can be printed on one 8.5” by 11” piece of card stock or paper. To save money, solicit a local printing company to print the cards for free. Encourage students to take as many of the cards as necessary to give to family and friends. It may be helpful to keep a supply of these cards in the counseling office and nurse’s office for students to pick up at their convenience.¹⁰

⁹ <http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/healthyteendating.org/htd-about-the-team> Idea from Texas Dating Violence Prevention Team

¹⁰ Adapted for Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, Green Ribbon Week Ideas <http://www.taasa.org/grw/2ResourcePacket.pdf>

Wear Your Heart on Your Sleeve: Have students wear an orange paper heart on their sleeve with the loveisrespect.org website to bring attention to the prevalence of teen dating abuse. Students can also post these hearts all over their school.¹¹

PSA Announcements: Create a series of announcements throughout Teen Dating Abuse Awareness Week. These announcements can include statistics, red flags, and recourses.

Example PSA using football coach¹²:

Coach: Hi! I'm head coach of the Hawks Football Team.

Being aggressive and dominating on the field is how the Hawks win games. Our players have to be tough and hit hard!

(Sound clip of big hit in football)

Coach: But being aggressive and dominating in a relationship is NOT OK!

Youth 1: Teenagers are twice as likely as other age groups to become victims of violent crimes.

Youth 2: One in three teenagers will experience violence in a dating relationship.

Coach: Dating violence is not OK and can include using hurtful words, controlling another person, using physical violence, and unwanted sexual contact. If you or someone you know is a victim of dating violence, please seek help. Talk to an adult you trust or call one of the many agencies in your community. You are not alone, and there is help.

CLOSE:

To get help or for more information, call the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474. You can also chat with them at loveisrespect.org.

Crossword Puzzle: Have a crossword puzzle contest. Students can pick up the cross word puzzle in the morning (possibly from the library or other central location) and turn it in during lunch or at the end of the day to receive a prize.

The cross word puzzle will use terms relating to dating abuse and healthy relationships. Example crossword-

[http://www.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolFamilySupport/dl09/2009%20NM%20TDV%20Toolkit%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.ped.state.nm.us/SchoolFamilySupport/dl09/2009%20NM%20TDV%20Toolkit%20(2).pdf)¹³

¹¹ Idea from Have a Heart campaign. <http://www.haveaheartcampaign.org/heart-on-your-sleeve.html>

¹² Taken (with a few changes) from National Center for Victims of Crime, Teen Victim Project

¹³ Crossword puzzle from New Mexico Public Education Department

Educate

Road to Healthy Relationships Hallway: This can be done using a green carpet, yellow brick road, or other type of pathway. Include road signs or components of the road to symbolize necessary characteristics of a healthy relationship. The end of the road could lead to a banner with the [loveisrespect](http://loveisrespect.org) website and phone number.

An alternative is to decorate a hallway to show the road to an abusive relationship, including warning signs and detour now signs.

Teacher Prevention/Education: Hand out information to all teachers on teen dating abuse statistics, warning signs of abuse, and what a teacher can do if they suspect abuse. These handouts can be given out along with chocolate, a carnation, or some other treat.

Use the fact sheet and resources sheet provided with this toolkit to create a unique handout that relates to what's going on at your school.

Information Booth and Domestic Violence Agency Representative: Set up a booth in your cafeteria during the week with information on recognizing red flags or resources in your area. You can also ask a representative from a shelter in your area to give information out at the table. Another option is to invite a representative from a local shelter to at any of the following events:

- Lunch table chat
- School assembly
- Parent's meeting
- Classroom visits
- Student council meeting
- Or brainstorm your own ideas

Speak Out

Art, Poetry, and/or Essay Contest: Organize a contest where students can submit self-created art, poetry, or writings concerning healthy relationships.

A contest is a great opportunity for students to creatively share concerns, their stories, and/or personal safety tips using graphic art, song lyrics, essays, poetry, button and/or bookmark designs.

Possible contest themes include:

- Dating violence
- Gender respect
- Words can hurt
- Personal boundaries
- Bystander intervention
- Rigid gender expectations/assumptions
- Speak Up. Speak Out.
- Flirting vs. sexual harassment

Depending on the type of contest you choose to organize, prepare registration forms for the entrants detailing all specifications for their entry. Teachers can help students identify areas of the school policy or student code of conduct that could also be highlighted on the poster to affirm student rights. Judges for the contest can be prominent members of your community such as the school principal, superintendent, or the executive director of your local domestic violence service center. If you don't have a budget that allows you to purchase prizes for the contest, ask local businesses if they would be willing to donate a prize. For example, local restaurants might offer gift certificates or movie theaters might offer a few free movie passes.

Getting the word out: Make sure to target your audiences with age-appropriate letters and flyers. In addition to targeting schools, local newspapers, community newsletters, local youth organizations may provide additional help to get the word out. Make the entry deadline early enough to allow time for judging the materials.

Releases: Make sure to provide and collect parental release forms. This will allow you to keep all entries for future use and will allow you to publicly recognize the contest's artists publicly. In the release, include information on how materials may be used.

Recognition/Distribution: Displaying the work can be another great way to raise awareness. Brainstorm a list of places in your school and community where you could exhibit the winning work. Below are ideas of places to inquire about showcasing the work, depending on the type of medium you choose for the artwork.

- Art: Display copies of the artwork through your school. You can also inquire about printing the artwork in your school newspaper and community newspaper. Designs can be used for buttons, bookmarks,

mouse pads, book covers, or banners. You can also ask local businesses (banks, restaurants, stores, etc) if they would display the artwork.

- Poetry/ Essay/ Lyrics: Written pieces can be read over the PA system and in English classes. They can also be put in school and community newspaper. Call local radio stations to see if they would be willing to read the essay/poetry/lyrics on air. The work can also be printed and hung around the school.¹⁴

Orange-Out or Purple-Out: Have all students and faculty wear the same color to signify unity and solidarity in the fight against abusive relationships. The official color for domestic violence is purple and the official color for dating abuse is orange. Pick the color your school feels would work best.

Dating Bill of Rights: On a large banner, write a dating bill of rights and encourage all students to sign it. Signings can be done at lunches and could work in conjunction with an information booth.

An example of a teen dating bill of rights can be found in the resource section of the loveisrespect website: <http://www.loveisrespect.org/resource-center/teen-dating-bill-of-rights/>. We encourage all to personalize the bill of rights so that it speaks more loudly to your school. When students sign the bill, they can add their own personal “right” to the list.

PSA Contest: Host a contest where students compete in designing awareness ad for themes such as dating abuse, healthy relationships, technology abuse, etc. The ad contest could be for a variety of mediums:

- Door decoration: classes decorate a teacher’s door in theme reflecting one of the chosen themes etc.
- Bulletin board decoration contest
- Daily PA system message contest- winners can be chosen daily read the message over the public announcement system.

Students could be enticed to participate in these contests if a small prize is offered as a reward to the winner. If the contest is in between classes, the winning class could win a pizza or ice-cream party.

Chain of Support: Educate students on what they can do if ever a friend or family member is in an abusive relationship and encourage them sign their name

¹⁴ Idea adapted from <http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/healthyteendating.org/htd-about-the-team>

on a chain link to pledge to support and advocate for those in abusive relationships. This chain can be hung around the school as a symbol to victims of abusive that the school is there to support them and they can feel safe to ask for help or talk about their situation.

Advocate

Policy: Learn what your schools policy is regarding Dating Abuse. With the passage of House Bill 121, it is mandated that each school district in Texas adopt and implement a dating violence policy. If your school does not have a policy, involve PTA, teachers, and the school board if adopting one. For information on HB 121, go to <http://www.tcfv.org/prevention/supporting-local-domestic-violence-and-dating-violence-prevention-efforts-in-texas/hb-121/>.

Example policy by the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence: http://www.opdv.state.ny.us/teen_dat_viol/modelpolicy.html. Also look to see if your school offers a stay-away contract. If not see what steps need to be taken to get this apart of your schools policy.
http://www.opdv.state.ny.us/teen_dat_viol/tdvschoolsampleplans.html.

School Curriculum: Advocate for lessons on dating abuse to be worked in to the curriculum for health classes. (PowerPoint for teachers from loveisrespect.org could be used). Students could also advocate that teachers weave Teen Dating Abuse into lesson plans in many different courses using the example curriculum from the Bar Association:
http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/healthyteendating.org/downloads/classroom-materials/26_Teacher's_Guide_%20Interesting_Fun_American_Bar_Association.pdf

Peer Education Organization: Start a peer education club or organization. Gather a group of committed students who want to spread awareness about sexual and dating violence, and who desire to make their school and community healthy and safe. The Victim Project provides a toolkit on starting a running a club.
<http://www.ncvc.org/tvp/AGP.Net/Components/DocumentViewer/Download.aspxnz?DocumentID=43492>

Ideas to Tie in With School Activities

February Dance: Have the theme of your school's February dance be Love is Respect. The venue can be decorated using the Love Campaign resources or you can make your own decoration inspired by loveisrespect and the Love Campaign. <http://www.loveisrespect.org/resource-center/love-campaign/>

Candy/Carnation Grams: If your school sells candy grams or carnations on Valentine's Day, attach information on healthy relationships, a quiz, and/or NTDAH's web address (www.loveisrespect.org).

Anything else?

These ideas were collected and/or created by our peer advocates and interns. If your student council comes up with new ideas for campaigns at your school, we'd love to hear about them. Visit our website and click on Contact Us in order to send us an email letting us know what you've been up to.