



#1 Thing

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE
AWARENESS MONTH

HELPERS ACTION GUIDE

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WHAT IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH (TDVAM)?

TDVAM is a month-long campaign dedicated to raising awareness about teen dating abuse. Every February, people across the United States join together for a national effort to bring awareness to teen dating violence.

Teen dating violence is more common than people think. One in three teens in the U.S. will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults.* Nearly half (43%) of college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors.*

By coming together each February, we can raise awareness and stop dating abuse before it starts. Only by continuing to talk about these difficult issues can we call attention to teen dating violence. TDVAM is a critical opportunity to let people know that teen dating violence is happening and that it can be prevented, but we must continue this important conversation all year.

*Statistics provided by the Break the Cycle 2011 College Dating Violence and Abuse Poll and loveisrespect.org.

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WHAT DOES #1Thing MEAN?

This year, *loveisrespect's* 2020 TDVAM campaign theme is **#1Thing**. Pronounced “One Thing” or “Hashtag One Thing,” this campaign is focused on small (but meaningful), actionable steps that everyone can take. By learning just one thing about teen dating violence and sharing that with someone you know, everyone, no matter their age, can make a difference.

Every single person has a part to play in ending dating abuse. Every step towards ending teen dating violence is an important one!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 9-15: Respect week

Monday, February 10: Respect Announcement

Tuesday, February 11: Wear Orange Day

Thursday, February 13: Facebook Live

Monday, February 24: Tweetstorm

Thursday, February 27: Facebook Live

ABOUT LOVEISRESPECT (LIR)

LIR's mission is to engage, educate, and empower young people to end abusive relationships. Officially launched in February 2007 as a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, LIR was the first 24-hour resource for teens experiencing dating violence and abuse, or needing to learn more about healthy relationships.

LIR strives to be a safe, inclusive space for young people to access information and get help in an environment that is designed specifically for them. LIR also mobilizes parents, educators, peers, and survivors to proactively raise awareness on healthy dating behaviors and how to identify unhealthy and abusive patterns. Find us at www.loveisrespect.org.

HOW COMMON IS TEEN DATING ABUSE?

Everyone has the right to a safe and healthy relationship. However, one in three teens experience some form of relationship abuse, and two thirds of them never tell anyone. Dating abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of their age, financial status, race, gender, sexual orientation, or background.

Every day, LIR receives hundreds of calls, online chats, and text messages from teens across the country who are experiencing abuse in their relationship or looking to learn more about prevention and healthy relationships. In a single year, nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner.

Abuse comes in many forms like emotional/verbal, financial, and digital- it's not just physical.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP PREVENT TEEN DATING ABUSE?

Knowing or even suspecting that your child or a teen that you know is in an unhealthy relationship can be both frightening and frustrating. It can be hard to know what steps to take or even how to start the conversation. Teens still say that parents and teachers are key influencers in their decisions. In a recent website poll 25% of people who visited loveisrespect.com did so because a teacher referred them to it. You're critical in helping teens develop healthy relationships, and you can provide life-changing support if they are in an abusive relationship.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP PREVENT TEEN DATING ABUSE?

Here are some tips to keep in mind when trying to help:

LISTEN & GIVE SUPPORT

It can be difficult to open up about abuse, and many teens fear that important adults in their lives will over-react, blame them, or be angry. Try to be supportive and non-accusatory. Ask how they want to be supported and how you can help.

ACCEPT WHAT YOU'RE BEING TOLD

Showing skepticism or disbelief can make anyone feel unsupported and isolated. Believe them when they are brave enough to share their experience with you.

SHOW CONCERN

Try saying something like, "You don't deserve to be treated like this, and I want you to know that this is not 'normal' relationship behavior. I am concerned for your safety, and I am here for you."

TALK ABOUT THE BEHAVIORS, NOT THE PERSON

Instead of saying, "Your partner is controlling, and I don't like them," you can say, "I don't like that your partner texts you to see where you are so often. How do you feel when you get those back to back messages from them?"



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP PREVENT TEEN DATING ABUSE?

Here are some tips to keep in mind when trying to help:

AVOID ULTIMATUMS

Resist the urge to give ultimatums or punishment, like grounding them, giving them detention, or taking their phone away. This cuts them off from support, and they may be less likely to trust that you're a safe person to talk to in the future.

BE PREPARED

Educate yourself on [dating abuse](#) and what a [healthy relationship](#) looks like. Share articles with your teen and ask them for their thoughts. By being open and willing to learn yourself, you're modeling good behavior. Learn more with our interactive [relationship spectrum](#) and our [healthy relationship quiz](#).

DECIDE ON NEXT STEPS TOGETHER

Ultimately, the decision about next steps will need to come from them, but you can still play a role in helping them identify safe options. Help them find additional support, like a counselor or a LIR advocate. At any time, you can encourage your teen to call, chat or text loveisrespect to receive professional advocacy services.



SPREAD AWARENESS

Every day is an important day to spread awareness about teen dating violence, but during TDVAM, it's especially important to add your voice.

Check out our Respect Week guide at www.loveisrespect.org/teendvmonth for ideas on what you can do.

In the meantime, follow us on social media by clicking below and visit our website www.loveisrespect.org for more information!



@loveisrespectpage



@loveisrespect



@loveisrespectofficial

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