

DOVE Committee Invites You To TAKE A STAND AGAINST DATING VIOLENCE

Dating violence is a pattern of behaviors used to exert power or control over a dating partner. Dating violence is any behavior by a dating partner that:

- Is used to *manipulate, gain control or power over* someone.
- Makes a *person feel bad* about himself or herself or loved ones (such as friends or family).
- Makes a person *afraid* of his or her dating partner.

Dating violence happens to boys and girls and can involve physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Physical abuse Emotional abuse Sexual abuse may
may include: may include: include

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| • Hitting. | • Ignoring a date's feelings. | • Forcing a date to have sex. |
| • Shaking. | • Insulting a date's beliefs or values. | • Forcing someone to have sex without protection. |
| • Throwing things. | • Name-calling. | • Forcing a date to do other sexual things he or she doesn't want to do. |
| • Pushing. | • Isolating a dating partner from others. | |
| • Using a weapon. | • Telling lies. | |
| | • Keeping a date from leaving. | |
| | • Threatening to hurt oneself. | |

What's the Impact of Dating Violence?

Dating violence can have serious consequences. While the immediate impact might be humiliation and/or physical pain, young people who experience abuse are more likely to be in physical fights or bring weapons to school. They might exhibit higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse as well as high-risk sexual behaviors. Targets of abuse are also more likely to contemplate or attempt suicide.

What Can We Do to Prevent Dating Abuse?

If abuse occurs once in a relationship, it's likely to occur again. Teaching students about the dynamics of dating abuse, as well as their legal rights and responsibilities in a dating relationship, can significantly decrease incidents of dating violence. Dating abuse is a serious issue that should be taken up with students as early as possible.

D.O.V.E. Committee

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<http://www.deltassist.com/dove.html>

Dating Violence: Info For Parents

It may be hard to think of your teen as having an intimate relationship, let alone an abusive one. But if you suspect dating violence, your son or daughter needs your support. Many adults fail to take teen dating abuse seriously. It's important to know that teen dating abuse can be as violent as adult domestic violence. Teens who experience or perpetrate abuse in their dating relationships are very likely establishing patterns of abuse that can carry on throughout their adult lives.

What Do I Need to Know?

Knowing the early warning signs of abuse can help you to identify whether your teen is in an abusive relationship before it's too late. Some of these signs include:

- Your teen's partner behaves in a way that is extremely jealous or possessive, such as checking in on your daughter or son often.
- You observe verbal abuse, such as name-calling or demeaning comments.
- Your teen gives up things that are important, such as time with friends and family, activities or other interests.
- Your teen has unexplained injuries.
- Your teen's partner abuses other people or animals.

What You Can Do

- **Tell your teen that you are concerned for his or her safety.** Point out that what is happening is not normal. Everyone deserves a safe and healthy relationship. Offer to connect your teen with a professional, such as a counselor or attorney, who will keep the conversations confidential.
- **Be supportive and understanding.** Stress to your teen that you are on his or her side. Provide information and non-judgmental support. Let your teen know that the abuse is not his or her fault and that no one deserves to be abused. Make it clear that you don't blame your teen and that you respect his or her choices.
- **Help bring prevention programs into your community.** You can help educate educators about the importance of this issue.

For more tips on how to help your teen, visit www.breakthecycle.org/im-a-parent.