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Teen Dating Violence Prevention Education

Objectives:

- Identify five key norms that create an environment in which teen dating violence is more likely to occur.
- Understand teen dating violence and its consequences
- Identify factors that can place teens at risk for perpetrating dating violence

Objectives:

- Build skills to talk with teens about the importance of healthy relationships
- Identify resources to prevent/respond to dating violence
- Identify prevention strategies that promote a positive school environment, model respectful behaviors, and help make your school safer and healthier for all students and staff

What is Primary Prevention?

Primary Prevention: Approaches that take place before teen dating violence has occurred to prevent initial perpetration

Examples:

- Legislation that mandates healthy relationships curriculum to prevent teen dating violence
- Media campaigns that promote positive behavior
- Training teachers to support social norms that foster gender equity and respectful relationships



Preventing What?

- Victimization?
 - Telling (often) girls what not to do
 - This leads to victim-blaming and making victims of relationship violence responsible for preventing their own abuse.
- Perpetration?
 - Shift in perspective for many
 - This is a PUBLIC HEALTH approach
 - Eliminate beliefs, norms that contribute to culture of (men' s) violence (against women)

Perpetrators & Victims

- Perpetrator/batterer/abuser
- Victim/survivor/target
- Females and males can be both
 - MOST of the time, however, males are perpetrators & females are victims
 - *This is NOT to say that all males are perpetrators*
- Larger underlying issues: oppression, sense of entitlement to power & control, women seen as weaker sex



Risk Factors

- **Risk factors** are the traits, characteristics, or circumstances that ***increase the likelihood*** that an individual will become a perpetrator of violence.
- Traits or characteristics of the individual or environment
 - Family, school, community, or society
 - NOT CAUSES, but correlations
 - Population-based, not individual



Risk Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Individual Level Risk Factors:

- A need for power and control in relationships
- Hostility and anger toward women
- Hyper-masculinity
- Beliefs in strict gender roles
- Exposure to violence
 - All types across the life span



Risk Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Relationship Risk Factors:

- Stress on families
 - May stem from:
 - Economic factors such as **powerlessness** related to job loss and seeking government assistance
 - Unhealthy family relationships
 - Family instability
 - Poor parenting
 - Physical discipline
 - Maltreatment
- Peer norms related to aggression and dominance



Risk Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Community Risk Factors:

- Poverty & lack of employment opportunities
- General tolerance of abuse and violence
- Lack of strong sanctions for perpetrators of sexual and intimate partner violence

Risk Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Societal Risk Factors:

- Social norms that support beliefs in strict gender roles
- **5 KEY NORMS** that create an environment in which violence is more likely to occur:
 - Power (value it & sense of entitlement for it)
 - Limited roles for women
 - Privacy & Silence (“It’s none of my business.”)
 - Culture of violence (media)

Protective Factors

Protective factors

- Provide a buffer against risk for violence
- May either reduce the risk of violence or provide alternative responses to violence.
- Positive factors that promote healthy development and are associated with nonviolence.
- Can be traits or characteristic of the individual or of the environment (family, school, community, or society)



Protective Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Individual Level Protective Factors

- Personal achievement
- Caring about school
- Feeling safe at school
- Feeling connected to school



Protective Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Relationship Level Protective Factors:

- Positive parental/adult caregiver involvement
- Parent/adult role models who:
 - Set positive examples for managing conflicts
 - Model positive relationship behaviors
 - Monitor teen's friends & activities
 - Protect young person from negative influences



Protective Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Community Level Protective Factors

- Diverse people are engaged within their communities in activities promoting healthy relationships and healthy sexuality
- The principles and skills of healthy relationships and healthy sexuality are demonstrated across various institutions



Protective Factors for Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence

Society Level Protective Factors:

- Social norms strongly support the development and maintenance of healthy relationships and healthy sexuality
- Shared responsibility for developing and maintaining thriving communities
- Ensuring accountability and expectations of people to interact respectfully is a fundamental part of life

What is Teen Dating?

- Let teens define the language/terminology
- Logistics of “dating” might be different over time, but the feelings/emotions the same
- Front area of the brain is not mature until early 20s – this controls:
 - Imagination
 - Abstract thought
 - Judgment of consequences
 - Planning
 - Controlling impulses

What is Teen Dating Violence?

- Teen Dating Violence includes any behavior by a boyfriend/girlfriend that
 - Is used to **manipulate**
 - Is used to **gain power & control**
 - Makes a person **feel bad** about herself or himself
 - Makes a person feel **afraid** for her or his safety



Abusive/Violent Behaviors

- **Psychological, emotional, or verbal abuse or coercion**
 - Controlling and/or monitoring, etc.
 - Manipulating and/or humiliation
 - Name calling, verbal assaults, and threats
 - Withholding info from dating partner
- This type of abuse often occurs before physical and/or sexual abuse

Abusive/Violent Behaviors

- **Physical abuse**

- Pinch, hit shove, kick, throw, grab, shake, slap, punch
- With the intent of controlling and manipulating

- **Sexual abuse**

- Any **unwanted** sexual contact
- Completed or attempted sex act
- Sexual contact (touching)
- Non-contact sexual abuse (voyeurism, threats, pornography)
- Can range from kissing to rape



Abusive/Violent Behaviors

- **Electronic or Technological Abuse**
 - Unwanted & excessive texts or posts on the Internet
 - Causes emotional distress & serves no legitimate purpose
 - Stalking, manipulation

Warning Signs or “Red Flags”

- What are some **RED FLAGS** that a student may be in an unhealthy dating relationship?
 - Consistent attendance problems
 - Noticeable drop in grades
 - Sudden request for school schedule changes
 - Sudden, noticeable weight change
 - Changes in behavior- becoming passive/quieter than usual
 - Isolation from social group
 - Regular bruising or other injuries
 - One teen seems to be controlling the other





Healthy Relationships

- What are some of the “**GREEN FLAGS**” that students may be in a healthy relationship?
 - Respecting of boundaries both physical and emotional
 - Solves problems together
 - Communicates openly and honestly
 - Seeks consent for any sexual behavior
 - Views partner as an equal

Healthy Relationships

- Educators need to:
 - Understand these health promotion behaviors we want students to adopt
 - Be prepared to reward these positive behaviors
 - Model these behaviors
- Adolescents in healthy dating relationships can develop a better sense of confidence
- Healthy relationship behaviors now = Prevent adult domestic violence in later life



How Prevalent is Teen Dating Violence?

- Both boys and girls are victims and perpetrators of abuse.
- Youth from all neighborhoods, income levels, and ethnic groups experience dating abuse.
- Abuse almost always reoccurs in a relationship. It doesn't just go away.

How Prevalent is Teen Dating Violence?

- Females ages 16-24 are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence than any other age group – at a rate almost triple the national average.
- Approx. 1 in 5 female high school students report being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.

Why Do Teens Stay in Violent Relationships?

- Love
- Confusion
- Belief that abusive partner will change
- Denial
- Shame/guilt
- Fear of retaliation or harm
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of information/resources



Why Teens Don't Report Dating Violence/Need Your Help

1: Teens may not take it seriously.

- New at dating; they think it is “normal.”
- Misinterpret violence/jealousy as a sign of love
- Pressure to be in dating relationships, even at a very young age; this makes it difficult to leave.
- Less developed relational skills—gender stereotypes are highest at this age



Why Teens Don't Report Dating Violence/Need Your Help

2: Adults May Not Take It Seriously.

- Adults think they will “just grow out of it.”
 - Most grow into a lifelong pattern of abuse if not addressed.
- Teens are afraid to talk to adults about this.



Why Teens Don't Report Dating Violence/Need Your Help

3: The legal/school system may not help.

- Most domestic violence laws do not include dating violence in their definition.
- Students/teachers are unaware of school policies regarding teen dating violence.
- Schools may be lax in enforcing a protection order.

Why Should We Address Dating Violence with Teens?

Youth in Relationships with abusers are more likely to:

- Have low self-esteem
- Be depressed
- Have eating disorders
- Binge drink
- Use drugs
- Practice unsafe sex with multiple partners
- Get seriously injured



Why Should We Address Dating Violence with Teens?

- 72% of youth, 11-14, say boyfriend/girlfriend relationships usually begin at age 14 or younger.
- 62% of youth, 11-14 who have been in a relationship, say they know friends who have been verbally abused (called stupid, worthless, ugly, etc.) by a boyfriend/girlfriend.



Ready to Take the Next Step?

Teen Dating Violence Prevention Planning

1. Population Based
2. Comprehensive
3. Multi-leveled or layered
4. Saturate rather than sprinkle
5. Using the principles of effective prevention (VA guidelines)

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Teen Dating Violence Prevention Planning

What constitutes Best Practices?

- Comprehensive
- Varied teaching methods
- Sufficient dosage
- Trained facilitators
- Positive relationships
- Appropriate
- Small successes
- Outcome evaluation



Good Intentions, but Wrong Directions in Teen Dating Violence Prevention

- Simple, short-term solutions
- “Program du jour” approaches
- Anger management or self-esteem enhancement for youth who abuse
- Mediation/conflict resolution to resolve teen dating violence



What Should Schools Do?

- Set clear school policies about reporting dating abuse or violence of any kind, whether it occurs on school grounds or not.
- Work to create a school environment where respect and responsibility are promoted.
- If a student has obtained a protection order or other court order due to dating abuse, take the situation seriously and proactively enforce the order on school grounds.



What Should Schools Do?

- Provide staff training on Teen Dating Violence Prevention.
- Teach a curriculum about Teen Dating Violence PREVENTION.
- Host a school-wide teen dating violence prevention campaign. Involve students in the design of the campaign.
- Educate parents about the issue.
- Have dating violence resources available.



What Can YOU Do?

Today and in the Classroom

- Ways to let students know you are there for them:
 - Keep an open environment
 - Maintain a respectful classroom
 - Give student your undivided attention – LISTEN.
 - Connect frequently
 - Understand question & respond genuinely
 - Model healthy relationship behaviors
 - Serve as a resource for students
 - Teach respectful conversation & communication
 - Teach negotiation & compromise



What Can YOU Do?

Today and in the Classroom

- Be conscious of your own endorsement of the 5 key norms.
- Call out sexist, racist, homophobic jokes, slurs or language. Don't just ignore it.
- Don't tell students to just "ignore" abuse or bullying.
- Analyze classroom materials. Use gender neutral language, refer to or give examples from female as well as male scientists/authors/mathematicians, and try to learn the students' names. Include material that reinforces your support of gender equality.

Resources

- Ohio Domestic Violence Network at 800-934-9840 or www.odvn.org
- National Teen Dating Violence Hotline at 866-331-9474 or www.loveisrespect.org
- Understanding Teen Dating Violence, CDC Fact Sheet:
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/TeenDatingViolence2009-a.pdf
- National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center: www.safeyouth.org

Resources

- Guidelines for the Primary Prevention of Sexual & Intimate Partner Violence:
www.vsdvalliance.org/secPublications/Prevention%20Guidelines%202009%5BI%5D.pdf
- Lessons from Literature Program:
www.lessonsfromliterature.org
- Applying the Principles of Prevention:
www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_4.pdf