



Economic Empowerment Program



In our last newsletter, we talked about why our Economic Empowerment program is such an important part of the support that we provide to our participants. Nationally, 99% of domestic violence survivors stay with or return to their abusers for economic reasons, and nearly 8 in 10 Americans, 78%, do not recognize financial or economic abuse as a type of Domestic Violence. Nationally, statistics state that the average survivor will leave and return to their abuser seven times before leaving for the final time. Because these numbers continued to grow, the need to increase awareness, resources and financial education has become imperative.

At CASA, our two Economic Empowerment Advocates, strive to provide participants with the highest level of care and expertise possible to

encourage and empower them to build a stable and successful financial future. In order to do this, our Economic Empowerment Advocates, engage in continuing education and training to increase their knowledge and resources to better assist and educate participants. In June of this year, our economic empowerment advocates, underwent countless hours of training and testing to become Certified Credit Counselors, which enhances their current curriculum and gives validation to the information being shared.

This is a national certification offered through the National Association of Certified Credit Counselors (NACCC) in cooperation with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV). CASA's Economic Empowerment Program consists of five areas of concentration: Financing, Housing, Employment, Education and Literacy. They also offer a financial literacy course through Allstate Foundation's Purple Purse Program, titled, "Moving Ahead Through Financial Management", provided by the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV).

Through this intensive training, our advocates have enhanced their skills to lead our participants to gaining personal and financial independence. Advocate Jean stated that "everyone deserves a chance whether they leave or stay in their abusive situation. Knowledge is power." The education focuses on all barriers affecting financial literacy. This includes providing clients with financial safety plans, creating spending plans, banking, savings, building credit and debt management. They are able to inform survivors of services and resources that are available to assist them, and can review different spending plans that can be tweaked to work for them on an individual basis. They emphasize the importance of self-assessment. Although sticking to the plan is the goal, Advocate Terry states that "encouragement is the main thing. We let them know that it is their decision. If they mess up, they just need to get back on track."

CASA's CEO, Sunshine Arnold, believes whole heartedly that "the addition of the Economic Empowerment Program is the key to ensuring long-term independence for survivors of domestic violence."

Click here for more on our Empowerment Program:

Get Help

Teen Prevention Program

Do these describe your partner...



You are not alone. We will believe you. It's not your fault.

CASA's 24 hour hotline is confidential

352-344-8111

#citruscares



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Teen dating violence is defined as the physical, sexual, psychological or emotional aggression within a dating relationship, including stalking. It can occur in person or electronically and might occur between current or former dating partners.¹

CASA's primary prevention program works with area schools to help students understand the dynamics of dating violence. Advocates go into classrooms to talk with students about dating violence, boundaries, communications skills, stereotypes, media influence and where to turn for help. This year, our advocate Samantha Argus-Bolyard has put together

posters that list some of the signs to look for to identify if a teen, or a friend, may be experiencing dating violence. These posters will be placed in the restrooms, both male and female, of all public middle and high schools throughout Citrus County. The posters include CASA's 24-hour hotline number and a QR code that can be scanned to go directly to the "Information for Teens" section of our web site to access information and resources.

Girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence, almost triple the national average. Among females, 94% were between the ages of 16 and 19 when first victimized. Keep in mind, this abuse can be perpetrated by current or former partners.²

In 2016, nearly 1 in 9 female teens and approximately 1 in 13 male teens reported physical violence by a dating partner.³ Over 1 in 7 female teens and nearly 1 in 19 male teens report having experienced sexual dating violence.³

A CDC report found that 23% of females and 14% of males experienced some form of dating violence by an intimate partner (sexual, physical or stalking) before the age of 18.⁴

Teens find it hard to get out of these situations for various reasons. They may share friends with their abuser, they may face peer pressure to stay in the relationship, or they may attend the same school and not be able to avoid their abuser.⁵

Even though teen dating violence is a growing issue, there is a great lack of awareness within schools, families and communities. Only 33% of abused teens have told anyone about the abuse. When asked, 81% of parents said they believed that it was not an issue or they didn't know if it was an issue with their children. Of those parents, 82% felt confident they could recognize signs, but a majority (58%) could not correctly identify all the warning signs of abuse.²

Below is a list of warning signs parents should be on the lookout for:⁶

- Teen has lost interest in activities they once enjoyed
- Teen has become more critical of themselves
- Teen becomes increasingly secretive and unwilling to share
- Teen changes appearance in a way that seems out of character
- Teen no longer shows interest in friends
- Teen's grades drop
- Teen experiences increased depression and anxiety
- Teen displays unexplained injuries, bruises, etc.
- Teen apologizes for partner's behavior, or minimizes it, when you question them about it
- Teen's partner exhibits unhealthy jealousy
- Teen is constantly in communication with their partner
- Teen becomes isolated and distant from you and their friends

If a teen recognizes any of these behaviors, or the behaviors listed on the posters, in their partners, or a friend's partner, they should reach out to a trusted adult. This could be a school counselor, a parent, or even a friend's parent. They can also call CASA's 24-hour hotline listed on the posters to receive guidance and/or resources.

References:

¹June 11, 2018 – Teen Dating Violence Infographic. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/teen_dating_violence.html.

²www.loveisrespect.org/resources/dating-violence-statistics/. Retrieved July 7, 2018.

³Kann, L. McManus, Harris, W.A. et al. (2016) Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States. 2015 MMWR.65(6).

⁴Prevalence and Characteristics of Sexual Violence, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence Victimization-National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, United States 2011, Matthew J. Breiding, MMWR Surveill Summ. 2014 Sept 5; 63(8):1-18.

⁵www.questforhealthkc.com. Retrieved July 1, 2018.

⁶www.domesticshelters.org/domestic-violence-lists/teen-dating-abuse-warning-signs. Retrieved July 6, 2018.

Click here to see more information for teens:

Information for Teens

If you are interested in getting involved by donating your time or

treasures to CASA, you can contact us at 352-344-8111 or click below for more information.

[Get Involved](#)

CASA, P.O.Box 205, Inverness, FL 34451, US



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