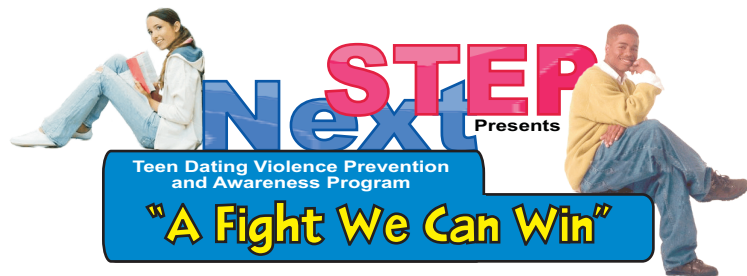


A Fight We Can Win

A Teen Dating Violence Prevention Program

Student Handbook





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This handbook is designed to:

- ✓ Help teenagers who are, or one day might be involved in an abusive relationship.
- ✓ Help you help a friend or family member who is in an abusive relationship.
- ✓ Help you keep from getting involved in an abusive relationship and end it safely if you do.



So if you're gonna fight
Let it be for what is right
because,
That's A Fight You Must Win

You'll fight for respect
And you'll fight for love
because,
That's A Fight You Will Win

How to use this handbook

DO keep this handbook in a safe place. If you've already received instruction about Teen Dating Violence (TDV) it will serve as an excellent review of what you have learned. If you have not had instruction about TDV, this handbook may be the only comprehensive instruction you ever receive. In either case, even if you don't think you need it now, one day you might - for yourself or for a friend.

DO NOT try to end an abusive relationship on your own. This handbook contains some very helpful information and you should use it - but not by yourself. Get some help!

DO show this handbook to your parents or a trusted adult. Regardless of your current situation you will always need their support - and this book will help them to help you.

DO NOT throw this handbook away. If you don't want to keep it, give it to someone who might need it.



This symbol indicates use of a verse from the original song, "You've Got The Power."

It's the law

In June of 2010, The Louisiana Legislature signed House Bill 46 into law. HB46 mandates that every 7th through 12th grade student in Louisiana public schools receive instruction about Teen Dating Violence. According to the mandate, students are required to learn three fundamental elements of teen dating violence:

- Definition of TDV
- Warning Signs of an Abusive Relationship
- Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship

Teen Dating Violence Is . . .

. . . an issue that affects young people of all cultures, religions, ages, sexual orientations, educational backgrounds and income levels. Any teenager can become the victim of an abusive relationship.

Definition of TDV

Teen Dating Violence is defined as a pattern of behavior where one person threatens to use, or actually uses - verbal, emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse to control his or her dating partner.

Verbal



Spreading false rumors name calling and yelling
Cruel and threatening - vulgar and degrading
Like nobody wants you - you're stupid and fat
Telling secrets and lies and things like that

Emotional



Calling and texting - that aggravation never ends
Isolating you from family and friends
Stalking and spying- humiliation and shame
Making you feel like you're the one to blame

Physical



Intimidation and size to hurt and control
Hitting, pushing, kicking and choking take a toll
Breaking your things and taking your stuff
But hurting my pet is when this one's had enough

Sexual



When you're afraid of getting too close under duress
And the way it makes you feel causes anguish and stress
If it's more than you can take and not enough to say no
And your partner shows you no respect it's time for you to go

Effects On Teen's Well-Being

.TDV can negatively affect your well-being.

- More likely to do poorly in school.
- More likely to engage in unhealthy behaviors.
- More likely to experience stress, eating disorders & depression.
- More likely to contemplate or attempt suicide.
- Will carry the patterns of violence into future relationships.
- Three times more likely than non-abused peers to experience violence during college.



Young Men May Believe

TDV is influenced by how teenagers view themselves & others.

Young men may believe:

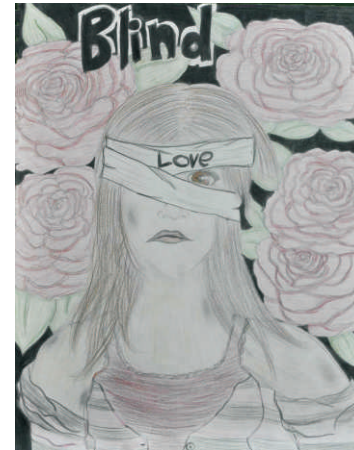
- ✱ They have the right to “control” their female partners.
- ✱ Physical aggressiveness is “masculine” behavior.
- ✱ They possess their partner.
- ✱ It’s OK to demand intimacy.
- ✱ They may lose respect if they are attentive & supportive toward their girlfriends.
- ✱ That they cannot be victims of dating violence.



Young Women May Believe

Young women may believe:

- ✱ They are responsible for solving problems in their relationships.
- ✱ Their boyfriend's jealousy, possessiveness & even physical abuse is “romantic.”
- ✱ Abuse is “normal” because their friends or mothers are also being abused.
- ✱ There is no one who will understand or to ask for help.



Cycle of Dating Violence

Stage One: Tension Building

Stage Two: Explosion

Stage Three: Honeymoon Phase



The longer abuse goes on, the more frequently it occurs and the more severe it can become.

Abuse occurs in a distinct pattern. Each stage can last for a few minutes or for several years.

Stage 1 Tension-bldg: A time of minor conflicts when one partner becomes very moody and easily agitated. This causes the other partner to feel like they are walking on eggshells. Threats increase. This stage can last a couple hours to months, depending on the couple's pattern.

Stage 2 Explosion: Violence erupts from the tension-building stage. One partner explodes into Verbal, Emotional, Physical and/or Sexual abuse. The violent partner punches, slaps, kicks, chokes, throws things and may even use weapons. Once the attack starts, there is little the victim can do to stop it.

Stage 3 Honeymoon Phase: A period of remorse or reconciliation usually follows the explosion. The abuser may apologize excessively, give gifts, express guilt or shame. The victim may experience many different emotions – from anger to love to confusion. The victim wants to believe the abuser will change, but w/o intervention, it is likely they will never truly change.

There will be a lapse in time, but soon enough Stage 1 will begin again. It is estimated that 80% of girls who have been physically abused by their partners continue to date them.

Warning Signs of Abusers



- Jealousy controlling and hypersensitivity
- Uses force and anger overbearing and moody
- Unpredictable and mean to animals and children
- Uses peer pressure and intimidation

- Extreme jealousy
- Hypersensitivity
- Controlling behavior
- Believes in rigid sex roles
- Quick involvement
- Blames others for problems
- Unpredictable mood swings
- Cruel to animals and children
- Alcohol & drug abuse
- Explosive anger
- Verbally abusive
- Abused former partners
- Isolates you from family & friends
- Threatens violence
- Uses force during arguments
- Was abused as a child

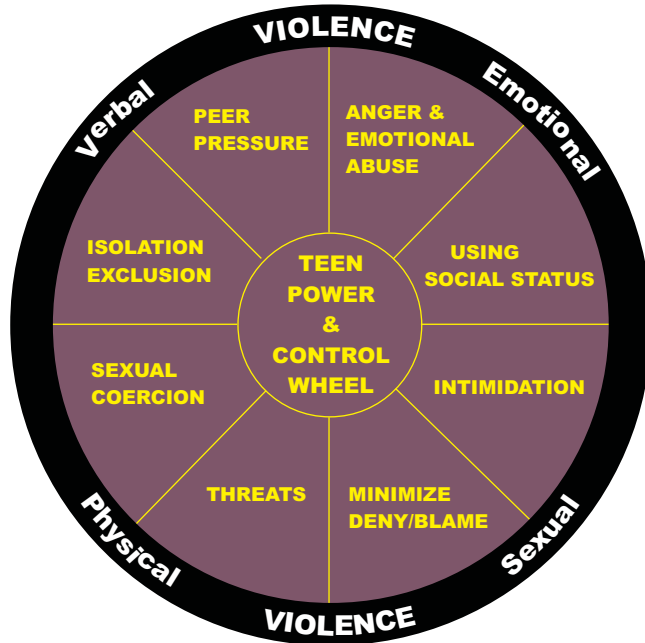
Common Clues of Victims

- Physical signs of injury
- Excuses
- Truancy/Failing grades
- Dropping out of school
- Indecision
- Low self-esteem
- Pregnancy
- Emotional outbursts
- Isolation
- Self-blame
- Fear of conflict
- Change in mood
- Change in personality
- Nervousness around partner
- Frequent phone calls
- Domination of free time



Power & Control

Teen Dating Violence is all about Power & Control



This **Power & Control Wheel**, from the Duluth Model, represents a snapshot of what a violent relationship looks like by portraying the most common tactics abusers use against their dating partners.

Teen Equality

Healthy relationships are all about Equality



This **Teen Equality Wheel**, from the Duluth Model, represents a snapshot of what a healthy relationship looks like by portraying the qualities exhibited by dating partners who share the power.

Safety Plan



Stick with your friends don't travel alone
Have your own money and stay close to home
Keep emergency numbers handy cell phone too
Tell your family and friends to keep a lookout for you

Until you know your dating partner well:

- Consider double-dating or dating in groups the first few times you go out with a new person.
- Before leaving on a date, know the exact plans and make sure a parent or friend knows.
- Stay in public places & familiar neighborhoods/surroundings.
- If you leave a party with someone you do not know well, make sure you tell another person when and with whom you are leaving.
- Assert yourself when necessary.
Be firm and straightforward in your relationships.
- Trust your instincts. If a situation makes you uncomfortable, try to be calm and think of a way to remove yourself from the situation.



Safety Plan

To avoid potentially abusive situations:

- Know the adults you can go to for help if you are being abused.
- Know whom you can go to at school in order to be safe (i.e., teachers, principal, counselors, security officers).
- Use the buddy system when going to school, classes or school activities.
- Know which friends you can tell who can help you remain safe.

Safety issues if you have encountered abuse:

- Change your cell phone number and get rid of a cell phone if it was given to you by your abuser.
- Keep emergency phone numbers in convenient & safe place.
- Don't wear scarves, necklaces or loose clothing that can be used to strangle.
- Inform trusted friends & family of past violence & to call police if abuser comes nearby or if they hear violence.
- Have someone escort you to your car. Don't be alone.
- If possible, have someone screen your phone calls.
- When the relationship is over end all contact with your abuser.

Your Digital World

What you need to know:

Modern technology is a wonder of science and innovation. When we control the way we use it the universe lies comfortably at our fingertips. However, in the digital domain some things just aren't what they seem. It is important for you to understand the differences, and the similarities, between the real and digital worlds.

The send button separates you from your electronic transmissions forever. Even if you trust the recipient you can never be 100% certain your messages and files will never be the target of abuse.

Your electronic devices connect you to everyone else on the planet. A good rule to guide your decisions about sending questionable messages and attachments is to imagine they will appear on a billboard across the street from your home, school or church. If that thought makes you uneasy, then you should consider very carefully your decision to send your message or upload your file.

Your computer and all your portable devices are subject to compromise. This also applies to your online platforms such as chat rooms and social networks.

Everything to which you allow public access becomes part of your digital resume. Damaging material can impact your future employment, admission to the college of your choice, acceptance for military service and bank loans to name a few.

Your Digital Safety

Your digital safety checklist:

If you do not possess the technical skills to discover, disable and prevent any of these risks from compromising your safety, seek the assistance of a trusted friend or adult who does.

- ✓ Don't give others the key to your digital house. Check privacy settings on your digital devices and social networks - and make them secure. Do not share passwords.
- ✓ Beware of "sexting." Sending sexually provocative images and/or overtly flirtatious text will not only harm your reputation - it could invite unintended consequences. This is reckless behavior and could be very dangerous.
- ✓ Excessive texting is a tactic abusers use to control you.
- ✓ Every word you, or others, place in the digital realm acts as a magnet for search engines. If you don't want it to be found, don't leave it laying around.
- ✓ Activating GPS devices reveals your location. Your cell phone is a GPS device.
- ✓ Keystroke loggers use spyware technology to report every word and activity. Be very careful who has access to your digital devices.

Getting Help

If you are the perpetrator of abuse:

- Hurting people hurt people.
- It is difficult to admit your behavior is wrong.
- Take responsibility for the problem - seek help to end it.
- Counselors can work with you to find a solution.
- Abusive adults, for the most part, will NOT change their behavior without some kind of outside, mandatory intervention.
- Intervention is designed to interrupt the cycle of violence (male & female socialization, male domination, personal responsibility).

I Pledge To:

Always treat my boyfriend or girlfriend with respect.

Never hurt my boyfriend or girlfriend - verbally, emotionally, physically or sexually.

Respect my boyfriend's or girlfriend's decisions concerning sex and affection.

Not be controlling or manipulative in my relationship.

Accept responsibility for myself and my actions.

Helping a Friend

Helping a friend or family member who is being abused:

- ◆ Tell them you know about the abuse, are concerned and that they do not deserve to be abused.
- ◆ Tell them the abuse is not their fault and that they are not alone. Do not judge.
- ◆ Be supportive and patient - and listen.
- ◆ Encourage them to talk to someone who can help, such as a parent, teacher or counselor. Offer to go with them.
- ◆ Help them develop a safety plan.
- ◆ Do not confront the abuser. Get help from a trusted adult.
- ◆ Use this handbook.

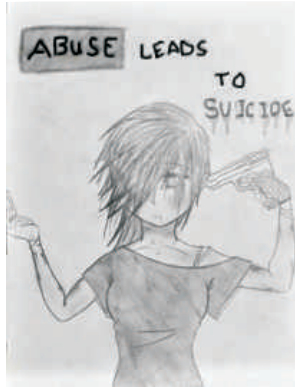
Helping a friend or family member who is being abusive to someone:

- Tell them you are still their friend but you strongly disapprove of their abusive behavior.
- Encourage them to seek help from a trusted adult. Offer to go with them.
- Do not accept excuses for the abuse.
- Do not try to help the couple work things out. Get help from a trusted adult.

Why They Stay

Why teens stay in abusive relationships

- ⊙ Love. Teens may sincerely love their partner even if they hate some of their behaviors.
- ⊙ Teens may not recognize abusive behavior.
- ⊙ They may believe they can change their partner or that their partner will change on their own.
- ⊙ They are trapped in the endless “merry-go-round” of violence (tension, explosion, honeymoon).
- ⊙ They may believe their partner’s promises to change.
- ⊙ They may believe the violent behavior is their fault.
- ⊙ Fear of being alone.
- ⊙ Low self-esteem.
- ⊙ Peer pressure. Fear of what their friends will think if they do not have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- ⊙ They want to end the relationship but don’t know what to do - or who to ask for help.



Healthy Relationships



Non-threatening behavior - and communication
 Support and respect - and negotiation
 Sharing the power - fairness and honesty
 Personal growth - and accountability



Healthy Relationships

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships:



Non-threatening behavior - and communication
 Support and respect - and negotiation
 Sharing the power - fairness and honesty
 Personal growth - and accountability

- ❖ Belief in non-violent conflict resolution.
- ❖ Ability to negotiate and adjust to stress.
- ❖ Open and honest communication. Letting each other express feelings.
- ❖ Making decisions together.
- ❖ Allow partners to pursue their own interests.
- ❖ Share in the decision-making process.
- ❖ Partners trust and can depend on each other.
- ❖ Mutual respect.
- ❖ The ability to compromise.
- ❖ Empathy. Understanding and caring about each other's feelings.
- ❖ Fighting fair. Finding peaceful resolutions for disagreements.
- ❖ Respect. Respect. Respect.



Healthy Relationships

It's all about Equality



This **Teen Equality Wheel**, from the Duluth Model, represents a snapshot of what a healthy relationship looks like by portraying the qualities exhibited by dating partners who share the power.

Notes



Now you know your rights and you've got a safety plan
You're not afraid of getting hurt and losing friends
Dead-end relationships - you're not a big fan
Because a healthy one doesn't have to end

Resources

National Dating Abuse Helpline
866.331.9474

National Sexual Abuse Hotline
800.656.HOPE (4673)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
800.656.TALK (8255)

Add local resources



You've got the control and you've got the power
Reach out to someone you can trust before you fall
Parent, friend, teacher, sister officer
When you need to ask for help now you know who to call



Teen Dating Bill of Rights

Teens have the right to:

Be treated with respect.
Be in a healthy relationship.
Not be hurt physically.
Not be hurt emotionally.
Ask for a date.
Refuse a date.
Suggest activities.
Refuse any activities.
Have their own feelings & express them.
Have their limits & values respected.
Refuse affection.
Refuse to have sex any time.
Refuse to lend money/possessions.
Have friends aside from their partners.
End a relationship.



To be treated with respect and not used and hurt
Refuse affection keep your values out of the dirt
And if your feelings aren't respected then here's another tip
Have your own friends - and end the relationship