



## TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION

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

### Did you know?

- Nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner in a single year.
- Houston area high school students:
  - 10% have experienced physical dating violence
  - 9% have experienced sexual dating violence
  - 10% were physically forced to have sexual intercourse
- Victims of digital abuse and harassment are 2 times as likely to be physically abused, 2.5 times as likely to be psychologically abused, and 5 times as likely to be sexually coerced.
- Violent behavior typically begins between the ages of 12 and 18.
- Though 82% of parents feel confident that they could recognize the signs if their child was experiencing dating abuse, a majority of parents (58%) could not correctly identify all the warning signs of abuse.
- Among high school students who have experienced sexual and physical abuse by a dating partner, 9 out of 10 have seriously contemplated suicide, and over 80% have attempted suicide.
- 1 in 4 dating teens is abused or harassed online or through texts by their partners.
- Students are not equipped to deal with dating abuse – 57% say it is difficult to identify, and 58% say they don't know how to help someone who's experiencing it.
- 75% of Texas 16-24-year-olds have either experienced dating violence or know another young person who has.
- 1 in 5 victims say they experienced digital abuse or harassment at school and during school hours (most takes place away from school grounds).

### WHAT TEEN DATING VIOLENCE LOOKS LIKE

- **Physical:** Hitting, shoving, slapping, punching, kicking, throwing objects, biting, blocking you from leaving a room, hair pulling, using a weapon, etc.
- **Psychological:** Threatening to hurt themselves, you or others, name calling, shaming, bullying, put downs, embarrassing on purpose, keeping you away from friends and/or family, trying to control, what you do or wear, telling you false things their friends/family say, etc.
- **Sexual:** Guiltting you into sexual activity, kissing or touching you when you don't want it, birth control sabotage, coercion, spreading rumors if you refuse to have sex, leaving unwanted marks or hickies, taking/threatening to take and/or distributing naked pictures of you without your permission, etc.
- **Electronical:** Repeated texting and calling, posting sexual pictures of you online, posting lies about you, demanding passwords, checking your phone to see who you are communicating with, tracking you online (ex: Snapmaps), etc.
- **Stalking:** A pattern of harassing or threatening tactics that are unwanted and cause fear in the victim.



### Relationship Red Flags:

- Threatens to break up with you
- Threatens to destroy your property.
- Threatens to hurt themselves, you, your friends and/or family.
- Is extremely jealous and/or possessive.
- Is not liked by your friends and/or family.
- Checks and monitors cell phone and internet activity.
- Tries to make you jealous
- Lacks respect for boundaries.
- Calls, emails and/or texts excessively.
- Makes you feel nervous.
- Pressures and/or forces you into having sex or going farther than you want to.



### Relationship Green Flags:

- Communicating effectively and civilly.
- Treating each other with respect.
- Setting and sustaining boundaries such as physical/sexual contact.
- Don't change – Everyone should stay true to who they are!
- Manage uncomfortable emotions such as anger and jealousy in a healthy way.
- Maintaining relationships with friends and family apart from your dating partner
- Valuing each other's privacy



### Tips for parents – the time to talk is now:

- Teens start hanging out in groups/dating in middle & high school – set expectations early.
- Create a safety plan with your teen before they begin dating.
- Use relationship examples from the news, movies or television as conversation starters.
- Be a safe person your teen can talk to or offer alternative adults they can speak with.
- Find a quiet and private place to talk about the following:
  - o What are your friends' dating relationships like?
  - o Have you seen unhealthy behavior with any of them, yourself or others?
  - o Goals: what you are aiming for (ex. graduating, going to college, and relationships)?
  - o Boundaries: what are your limits and values (ex. physical boundaries/curse words)?
  - o What makes a healthy relationship (refer to Healthy Relationship Green Flags)?
  - o How is your relationship going?
  - o What are healthy ways to break off a relationship and/or to cope with breakups?
  - o Time management: how are you balancing relationship, school, friends, activities, etc.?
  - o Take your time – relationships have different stages!
  - o Value privacy – it is never safe to share passwords with friends or those you date!
- If your child discloses abusive behaviors in themselves or others contact their school counselor.
- Don't stop the conversation – this discussion should be on-going!
- Set a good example for your child and model healthy relationships.
- Remind your child that it is never their fault if they are victimized!

#### IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE:

- Utilize privacy settings online.
- Turn off your location on social media, games and camera.
- Refrain from checking yourself in.

#### QUESTIONS:

- Chat at [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)
- Text LOVEIS to 22522\*
- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline:  
1-866-331-9474

#### IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE:

- Call 911