



Teens: Know the Top Ten Signs of Dating Abuse!

February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

- One in Three Teens Is a Victim of Verbal or Physical Abuse by a Dating Partner –
- New Jersey “Safe Dating” Bill Due for Vote in State Senate and Assembly –

Livingston, N.J., February 15, 2011 – In response to the large body of evidence that teen dating abuse is prevalent and pervasive, Congress has declared the month of February to be **National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month**. Indeed, a majority of teens who have been in a dating relationship report having endured emotional abuse from their partner, and a shocking proportion have been threatened with or subject to physical violence. Worse, most adolescents say that abuse is “normal,” to be expected in teen relationships.

The numbers paint a disturbing picture. Studies have found that:

- One in three adolescents who has been in a dating relationship has experienced verbal or physical abuse from a dating partner.¹
- Nearly 80% of girls who have been physically abused continue to date their abusive partner.²
- 19% of teens in a 2010 survey confessed to committing violence against a dating partner.³
- 15% of teens who have been in a relationship report having been hit, slapped, or pushed by their dating partner.⁴
- 21% of teens who have been in a relationship say their partner tried to prevent them from seeing family or friends.⁴
- 43% of those in a “serious” relationship say that it’s “good” or “okay” for a dating partner to behave in a jealous or controlling manner.⁴

NCJW, Essex County, Center for Women Acts to Raise Awareness in February

In recognition of the February National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, the Linda & Rudy Slucker NCJW Center for Women, a program of the National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section, is taking these steps:

- Encouraging teens and parents to be aware of the telltale Early Warning Signs and the Top Ten Signs of Teen Dating Abuse (attached).
- Creating a High School Tool Kit to guide high New Jersey high school students in establishing **Stop TDA** clubs. The purpose of the student club is to plan and implement teen dating abuse awareness activities in high schools every February, during National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. The High School Tool Kit will be available in September 2011.
- Continuing the NCJW Teen Dating Abuse Education program throughout high schools in Essex and surrounding counties. Trained Teen Dating Abuse educators conduct two-day programs in high school health classes in schools that request the program. Educators from the Linda & Rudy Slucker NCJW Center for Women have been conducting the program since 1994. For your high school to participate in the program, contact us at ncjw@ncjwessex.org for more information.
- Supporting the New Jersey Safe Dating Bill. Known as S.2114 in the State Senate and A.2920 in the State Assembly, this bill directs the Department of Education to develop a school district dating violence policy and requires school districts to provide dating violence education in the health curriculum. The bill is awaiting a vote in the New Jersey State Senate and Assembly.

About the Linda & Rudy Slucker NCJW Center for Women

Located in Livingston, N.J., the Linda & Rudy Slucker NCJW Center for Women (CFW) provides free and low-cost services for women and children -- such as a teen dating abuse prevention program, support groups, a workshop/speaker series, computer classes, legal and financial counseling, and back-to-work mentoring. CFW is a program of the National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section, a nonsectarian volunteer organization with more than 3,000 members.

¹Halpern, CT, Oslak SG, Young, ML, Martin SL, Kupper. Partner violence among adolescents in opposite-sex romantic relationships: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. *AJPH*. 2001;91:1679.

¹ Teen Dating Abuse Survey 2005, Teenage Research Unlimited, Commissioned by Liz Claiborne.

¹ Rothman EF, Johnson RM, Azrael D, Hall DM, Weinberg J. Perpetration of physical assault against dating partners, peers, and siblings among a locally representative sample of high school students in Boston, Massachusetts. *Arch Ped Adol Med*. 2010;164:1118.

¹ Teenage Research Unlimited. Teen Relationship Abuse Survey. Commissioned by Liz Claiborne Inc., Conducted March 2006.

Know the Early Warning Signs and the Top Ten Signs

Teen dating abuse can include emotional abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse, or sexual abuse. Experts have noted the following signs:

Early Warning Signs that a Teen May Abuse a Girl/Boyfriend

1. Says, "I love you" very early in the relationship.
2. Is extremely possessive or jealous.
3. Loses his/her temper quickly.
4. Always blames other people.

Top Ten Signs of Teen Dating Abuse

1. Calls you names or puts you down.
2. Prevents you from spending time with your family or friends.
3. Tells you what to do and when to do it.
4. Checks up on where you are.
5. Blames you.
6. Threatens you with harm.
7. Spreads rumors about you.
8. Threatens to kill him/herself if you break up.
9. Hits, pushes, kicks, or harms your body in any way.
10. Forces you to perform sexual acts or send sexual photos.