

WHAT TEACHERS AND SCHOOL COUNSELORS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TEEN DATING ABUSE

Teens and young adults are the most at-risk age groups for dating and domestic violence. Girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence, almost triple the national average (LoveIsRespect.org).

Dating violence can be especially concerning because young people are often new to relationships, they may be more trusting or impulsive and may not have learned what healthy relationships look like. This vulnerability may end up being exploited by an abusive partner, which is why it's so important for teens to learn about relationships and have supportive adults like teachers and counselors who they can trust when they need help!

Modeling Healthy Relationships in Schools

There are many ways that you can model characteristics of healthy relationships and prevent dating abuse in schools. You may have a code of conduct or social emotional educational program that already addresses some of these characteristics, like respect and kindness. Having these expectations in school is a great step, but it is as important that students know they are worthy of healthy relationships with everyone in their life, including friends, siblings, teammates or dating partners.

Here are a few ideas to raise awareness about healthy relationships with the students in your school:

- Host a campaign during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (February). Work with your Student Council or other groups to come up with messaging that is relevant and impactful for students.
- Introduce violence prevention programs that utilize the power of peer-to-peer education. Programs like Coaching Boys Into Men and Athletes as Leaders provide opportunities for athletes to positively influence their peers and school culture.
- Work with a local domestic violence service provider to speak with students, train teachers or identify supportive programs that may address specific needs at your school.

RED FLAGS TEACHERS MIGHT SEE

Unfortunately, teen dating abuse is all too common. You may become aware of unhealthy or abusive behaviors before a student recognizes them.

The signs could look like...

- Quitting a sport or extracurricular activity that they once enjoyed
- Unexplainable or new changes in grades or attendance
- Distancing from social groups and friends, only hanging out with their partner
- Sudden changes in appearance, behavior or personality
- Apologizing for, minimizing or excusing concerning behavior (like their partner's jealousy, temper or possessiveness)

1 in 3 teens will experience some form of abuse by a dating partner.

Supporting A Student

As a staff member interacting with students, it's important to recognize the responsibility you hold to meaningfully support students who come to you for help. If you work for an educational institution that receives federal funding, you also have certain requirements under Title IX.

It is critical that you understand your duties and responsibilities under Title IX and as a mandated reporter. Understanding your role, as well as the rights that students are entitled to, will prepare you to better support those who need it. If you have questions about Title IX, reach out to your Title IX Coordinator.

Resources to Access for More Information:

- [LovelsRespect.org](https://www.lovelisrespect.org/)
- [AthletesAsLeaders.org](https://www.athletesasleaders.org/)
- [CoachesCorner.org](https://www.coachescorner.org/)
- [KnowYourIX.org](https://www.knowyourix.org/)



WCA 24-HOUR HOTLINE - 208.343.7025

LOVE IS RESPECT - 866.331.9474
OR TEXT 'LOVEIS' TO 22522