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Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

# Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

## What Is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month?

February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month (TDVAM). This is an issue that impacts everyone – not just teens – but their parents, teachers, friends and communities as well. Together, we can raise the nation’s awareness about teen dating violence and promote safe, healthy relationships.

In his [Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month Proclamation](#) President Obama called on all Americans “to stand against dating violence when we see it.” At a time when an estimated 1 in 10 teens will experience dating violence we all must take this opportunity to amplify our efforts and shine a spotlight on this important issue.

## What Is the Impact of Teen Dating Violence?

Nationwide, youth age 12 to 19 experience the highest rates of rape and sexual assault. Studies show that approximately 10% of adolescents report being the victim of physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner during the previous year. Girls are particularly vulnerable to experiencing violence in their relationships and are more likely to suffer long-term behavioral and health consequences, including suicide attempts, eating disorders, and drug use.

Adolescents in abusive relationships often carry these unhealthy patterns of violence into future relationships. Indeed, children who are victimized or witness violence frequently bring this experience with them to the playground, the classroom, later into teen relationships and, ultimately, they can end up the victims and perpetrators of adult intimate partner violence.

## How Do I Participate in Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month?

During Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month (TDVAM), we aim to break the cycle of violence by providing support and services to victims, their families and their communities. The following activities represent just a few of the exciting ways that everyone can – and hopefully will – engage in this work:

- [TeenDVmonth Toolkit](#) – a brand new toolkit released by Break the Cycle just in time for TDVAM. The toolkit provides adult allies with resources to engage communities, especially youth, in a discussion about healthy relationships.
- [What's Real Tool Kit](#) – The Idaho Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence's [Center for Healthy Teen Relationships'](#) new toolkit has an array of resources for use year-round as well as during TDVAM. It includes a youth-led positive social marketing campaign; posters, stickers, bookmarks, and other materials to engage both youth and adult influencers; and reproducible materials you can use to engage youth online.
- [Safety Planning Guide](#) – a project of [Break the Cycle](#) and the [National Dating Abuse Helpline](#). The interactive planning guide allows youth to create a personalized safety plan for work, school, home and while out with a partner. It also provides tips, local resources, and a pocket-sized personalized safety checklist.
- [That's Not Cool Ambassador Program](#) – the Ambassador Program is a unique opportunity for youth to share their voices to this national initiative while helping to raise awareness about digital dating abuse in their schools and local communities.

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All teens and tweens across the country are invited to join this [Futures Without Violence](#) initiative.

- [Preventing and Responding to Teen Dating Violence](#)– this collection of materials including curricula, training tools, guide books, fact sheets, applied research papers, and model programs, emphasizes collaborative and multilevel approaches to the prevention of and response to teen dating violence. It includes information related to: 1) young people, 2) parents and care takers, 3) men and boys, 4) teachers and school-based professionals, 5) health care professionals, and 6) domestic violence and sexual violence service providers.
- [Runaway & Homeless Youth and Relationship Violence Toolkit](#)– this toolkit was developed by and for advocates, from the runaway and homeless youth and domestic violence and sexual assault fields, to help programs better address relationship violence among youth who have run away from home, are living on the streets or are homeless. Sections of the toolkit include key terms and definitions, research and resources, a look at each field, recommendations for building partnerships and services, sample materials, and help for teens in need. Check out this one page [fact sheet](#) about the toolkit (PDF, 1 page).

### **Blog! Tweet! Or Participate in a Webinar!**

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Program at the Administration for Children and Families is working to bring visibility to the work of advocates, the strength of victims, and the Federal initiatives addressing this pervasive issue by hosting social media events and webinars throughout the month of February. Click [here](#) to access their calendar of events (PDF, 2 pages).

### **Talk to Teens!**

Everyone can make a difference by reaching out to young people in simple ways. As we interact with teens in our work or personal lives each of us can act on President Obama’s call to stand against teen dating violence by:

- Discussing the [warning signs](#) of dating abuse ([all kinds](#), not just physical abuse).
- Creating a [positive](#) connection to the issue – talk about the [characteristics of healthy teen relationships](#), not just abusive ones – and use statistics sparingly.
- Talking about how the media portrays healthy and unhealthy relationships. For example, many popular movies, TV shows, commercials, books, and magazines portray stalking as romantic or harmless when it is actually very dangerous.
- Getting involved even if you don’t have a lot of resources – an information table, classroom discussion, or school announcement can get the conversation started.

### **Anyone Can Do It!**

Anyone can participate in TDVAM! Consider one of the following activities:

- Request a TDVAM proclamation from your state or local government, such as [this example from Minnesota](#) (PDF, 1 page).
- Register your local school for the [National School Announcement](#).
- Ask local school teachers to include a discussion about healthy relationships in their February [lesson plans](#) (PDF, 1 page).
- Write an op-ed in your local newspaper.
- Support youth-led events and projects.

### **How Do I Get Help?**

If you know of a teen or parent that could benefit from speaking to a caring, well-trained peer advocate, please connect them with the National Dating Abuse Helpline, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, at 1-866-331-9474 (TTY: 1-866-331-8453), by texting "loveis" to 77054, or through live chat at [loveisrespect.org](#).

For more information, please visit the [Department of Justice, Office on Violence Women](#).

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## Announcements

Resource: [Youth Advisory Councils](#)

Share with Youth: [ODP Art Challenge: How Prevention Can Create Better Health for Everyone](#)



Resource: What Has Longitudinal Research on Teen Dating Violence Taught Us?

Resource: Runaway & Homeless Youth and Relationship Violence Toolkit

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

### Feature Article

Youth Voices Have Moved to YE4C

2011-2021 YRBS Data Summary and Trends Report

Resources to Support Youth and Families During the COVID-19 Emergency

Just Launched! Redesigned YE4C

Justice Department Research Shows That School-Level Interventions Reduce Dating Violence by up to 50 Percent

### Federal Links

Preventing Teen Dating Violence and Youth Violence Program

Promoting Positive Adolescent Health Behaviors and Outcomes: Thriving in the 21st Century

Report: Predicting Intimate Partner Violence for At-Risk Young Adults and Their Romantic Partners

Resource: Considering Family Context as an Important Element in the Prevention and Intervention of the Development of Teen Dating Violence

Resource: Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices

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- Tristan

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