

# Love is Not Abuse



## TEEN DATING VIOLENCE



# What is Teen Dating Violence?



- **Teen dating violence is a pattern of physically, sexually, verbally, and/or emotionally abusive behavior in a dating relationship**

# Warning Signs



- *Extreme Jealousy*
- *Constant put-downs*
- *Telling the other person what to do*
- *Explosive temper*
- *Threats*
- *Possessiveness*
- *Preventing the other person from doing what he/she wants to do.*
- *Severe mood swings*
- *Making false accusations about the other person*
- *History of violence*
- *Isolating the other person from family and friends*
- *Seeking financial control over the other person*

# Warning Signs



- *When your friend and her boyfriend are together, he calls her names or puts her down in front of other people.*
- *He acts extremely jealous when she talks to other boys, even when it is completely innocent.*
- *She apologizes for his behavior and makes excuses for him.*
- *She frequently cancels plans at the last minute, for reasons that sound untrue*

# Warning Signs



- *He's always checking up on her, calling or paging her, and demanding to know where she has been and who she has been with*
- *You've seen him lose his temper, maybe even break or hit things*
- *She seems worried about upsetting him or making him angry.*
- *She is giving up things that used to be important to her, such as spending time with friends or other activities, and is becoming more and more isolated*

# Warning Signs



- *Her weight, appearance or grades have changed dramatically.*
- *These could be signs of depression, which could indicate abuse.*
- *She has injuries she can't explain, or the explanations she gives don't make sense.*

# What is Teen Dating Violence?



- **Physical Abuse**

- *Any Intentional unwanted contact with the other person's body. Physical abuse does not have to leave a mark or a bruise.*

- ✦ **Examples:**

- ✦ **Scratching**

- Choking**

- ✦ **Kicking**

- Using a Weapon**

- ✦ **Pulling Hair**

- Biting**

- ✦ **Pushing**

- Burning**

- ✦ **Shoving**

- Strangling**

- ✦ **Punching**

- Slapping**

- ✦ **Pinching**

# Sexual Abuse



- *Any sexual behavior that is unwanted or interferes with the other person's right to say "no" to sexual advances.*
- **Examples:**
  - Unwanted kissing or touching
  - Date Rape
  - Forcing someone to go further than he or she wants to
  - Unwanted rough or violent sexual activity
  - Not letting someone use protections



# Verbal/Emotional Abuse



- *Saying or doing something to the other person that causes the person to be afraid, have lower self-esteem, or manipulates or controls the person's feelings or beliefs or behaviors.*
- **Examples**
  - Name calling and put-downs
  - Insulting the person or his or her family or friends
  - Yelling and screaming
  - Threatening violence or harm
  - Making racial slurs about the person
  - Making unwanted comments of a sexual nature to the person.

# Verbal/Emotional Abuse Continued...



- Embarrassing the person in front of others.
- Spreading negative rumors about the person
- Preventing the person from seeing or talking to friends and family
- Telling the person what to do.
- Making the person feel responsible for the violence/abuse.
- Stalking
- Harming (or threatening harm to person's pets.

# Verbal/Emotional Continued...



- Making the person feel guilty about leaving the relationship by talking about the abuser's hard life and how alone and abandoned the abuser will feel if left.
- Threatening to commit suicide
- Threatening to expose personal information about the person (e.g., sexual orientation, immigration status)
- Threatening to take away the person's child or children.

# Roles in Dating Violence



- *Abuser: A Person who physically, sexually, verbally or emotionally hurts an intimate partner.*
- *Target: A person who is hurt physically, sexually, verbally or emotionally by an intimate partner*
- *Bystander: A person who is aware that someone is being abused in a dating relationship. The bystander may become aware of the abuse through the abuser's or the target's actions or words.*

# Helping a Friend or Family Member



- Tell the person that is being abused that you are concerned for their safety.
- Acknowledge that the abuse is not this person's fault.
- Be supportive and patient
- Avoid judging your friend or family member.
- Encourage the person to talk to others who can provide help and guidance.
- Help the person to develop a practical and specific safety plan that focuses on preventing future harm.
- Do not confront the abuser, it could be dangerous for you or your friends.
- Remember, you cannot “rescue” the person. It is difficult seeing someone you love hurt.

# Part 2



## **DATING VIOLENCE PATTERNS OF ABUSE:**

**MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE THE TARGET OF DATING VIOLENCE FIND THAT THE ABUSE OCCURS IN A DISTINCT PATTERN THAT IS REPEATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN: TENSION BUILDING, EXPLOSION, AND HONEYMOON. EACH PHASE CAN BE AS SHORT AS A FEW SECONDS, OR AS LONG AS SEVERAL YEARS.**

# Phase 1: Tension Buildup

*Things start to get tense between the two people*



- The two people argue a lot
- The abuser yells at the target for no reason
- The abuser makes false accusations about the target.
- The target feels that she or he can't do anything right.
- The atmosphere is tense, as if things could blow up at any moment.

## Phase 2: Explosion

*The tension is released in a burst of physical, sexual, and/or verbal/emotional abuse.*



- Scream and yell in a way that is frightening and/or humiliating.
- Hit, grab, shove, kick, slam the other person against the wall, etc.
- Throw objects
- Threaten to hurt the other person.
- Rape the other person or force him/her to go further sexually than he or she wants to.



## Phase 3: Honeymoon

*The abuser tries to make the target stay in the relationship by apologizing and/or trying to shift the blame for the abuse onto someone or something else. The abuser may:*



- Apologize and promise that the abuse will never happen again.
- Say “I love you.”
- Buy the other person flowers or gifts.
- Accuse the other person of doing something to cause the abuse.
- Blame the abuse on other things such as alcohol or other drug use or stress.

## And then . . .



- After the honeymoon phase, the tension starts to build again, leading to Another explosion.
- Over time, the honeymoon phase may get shorter and Gradually disappear, and the explosions may become more violent and Dangerous.
- Some targets of dating violence never experience the honeymoon phase—just the tension building and explosion phases.

# False Beliefs and Attitudes that Support Teen Dating Violence



- Can't believe date will break up with them
- It's the abusers fault
- OK for a boy to hit a girl
- A gift will make up for abuse.
- Must "check up" on you all the time.
- If you spend money, the other "owes" you something.

## False Beliefs and Attitudes that Support Teen Dating Violence



- Guys have to be strong and “in control”
- Targets must be doing something wrong, or they would not be abused.
- If they are being abused, they must like it.
- Women of certain ethnicities are more submissive than others.

# Part 3



## **ENDING TEEN DATING VIOLENCE**

# Increasing your safety in an abusive dating relationship



- *Talk with a trustworthy adult (Parent, guardian, teacher, counselor, clergy) about what you are experiencing.*
- *Create a Teen Dating Safety plan*
- *Call the Police*
- *With help from a trustworthy adult, get a restraining order or protective custody.*
- *If your home is not a safe place and you live with the abuser, consider going to a domestic violence shelter.*

# Reaching out to a friend



- **What can teenagers do in their relationships with friends and family members in the school and in the community to help prevent teen dating violence?**

# Ideas



- Don't use language that promotes abusive attitudes and behaviors.
- Don't support degrading or sexist jokes and put-downs by laughing at them—even if someone you like told the joke or made the put-down.
- Don't purchase or listen to music with degrading or sexist lyrics—even if you like the musician who perform it.
- Think about how your own attitudes and behaviors might contribute to violence and abuse.



# Ideas continued...



- Be an example to your peers: treat your friends, boyfriend or girlfriend and family members with respect.
- Talk about dating violence with children younger than you.
- Support other people who are working to end dating violence
- Become active in teen dating violence preventions efforts in your school and community.

# Reaching out to a friend who is abusing someone



- Explain that you are still the person's friend, but that you don't like it when he or she is abusive to someone.
- Do not accept the abuser's excuses for the abuse. Say clearly that abuse is never OK.
- Encourage the friend to find a counselor whom he or she can trust.
- When you see your friend, treat his or her partner with respect, acknowledge and praise it.
- Do not act as a "go-between" to help the couple work things out.

# Making a dating safety plan



- **Keep important phone numbers nearby at all times. Always have a cell phone or change for a phone call.**
- **Keep a record of all incidents of violence. Save any threatening or harassing letter and e-mail text or voicemail messages that the abuser sends.**
- **Explain to trustworthy friends and family that if they think she or he may be in danger, call 911.**
- **Plan escape routes from places like home and school**
- **Try not to be alone in isolated areas.**

## Safety Plan continued...



- Join a support group for teenagers who have experienced dating violence.
- Put the original copies of important documents (id, health insurance) in a location that cannot be easily found by the abuser.
- Choose an e-mail account password that the abuser will not be able to guess to that the abuser will not be able to read his or her incoming and outgoing mail.

# If leaving the relationship consider



- Get a restraining order
- Tell close family and friends that they are no longer in the relationship
- Change one's school schedule to avoid being in class with the abuser.
- Screen calls and/or change one's phone number to an unlisted number
- Avoid going to location where the abuser might look for him or her.

# Emergency Resources & References



- 911 Police
- CAPSA
  - 435.753.2500
  - [www.capsa.org](http://www.capsa.org)
- [Loveisrespect.org](http://Loveisrespect.org) (1-866-331-9474)
- [Breakthecycle.org](http://Breakthecycle.org) (1-888-988-teen)