



February 2010 National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month “What We Love”

This toolkit is to serve as a guide of activities for your school and community to participate in the Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month High School Student Council Contest or Middle School/Junior High School Contest. While we have suggestions for a range of activities for National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, we encourage you to think outside of the box and create your own activities that will work in your school and community – creativity will be rewarded!

Get everyone involved!

Remember, this is a school-wide activity, so work with as many school based groups to engage as many students as possible (for example, FAA, FCCLA, FHLA, NHS, etc.). Also, make sure that you are working with and have the approval of the Administration. You may also want to work with:

- School Counselors and in-school organization advisors,
- Health, teen living, media, English, music, art or other teachers
- Advocates from your local domestic violence shelter who are knowledgeable on teen dating violence

National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month Toolkit

In late January, each middle school, junior high school, and high school will receive a box of materials from the Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project and Start Strong Idaho. The toolkit will include:

- € 27 or more posters - a series of eight posters
- € DVD from That's Not Cool with Digital Abuse videos you can show in a class
- € Stickers and buttons
- € 1 or more water bottles and/or t-shirts for prizes – you decide how to give them out!
- € Bookmarks on Healthy Relationships and the Responsible Use of Cell Phones and Healthy Relationships

Activity Ideas

Here is a list of activities for your school or community. Please remember this list is not a comprehensive list of activities and we encourage you to build on these ideas or come up with other new ideas to promote healthy relationships and increase awareness on teen dating abuse!

Community-wide activities

- € Work with your Mayor to get a Mayor's Proclamation signed. For an example of Proclamation language go to page 10 of this document.
- € Work with your local TV news, newspaper, or radio station to do a story on teen dating violence, healthy relationships, and the activities you are doing in your school during National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. For statistics on teen dating violence go to pages 7 – 9 of this document.
- € Write an opinion piece for your local newspaper on the importance of education about teen dating violence and healthy relationships in schools.
- € Send information home with parents about the importance of healthy relationships and/or teen dating abuse.
- € Facilitate a information session for parents on teen dating violence at your school (contact us for speakers **at least two weeks before the event** at 208 384-0419 or email Kimberly at kimberlym@idvsa.org).

General School-wide Activities

- € Display posters provided in the toolkit in common areas around your school (**this is required to enter the contest**)
- € Having an information booth or table set up in the cafeteria or in the halls during lunch or at an athletic event to hand out the stickers and buttons we have provided.
- € Creating a "Promote Healthy Relationships" or "Anti-violence" pledge banner that students can sign the first week of the month. The banner can be hung in a prominent location in your school throughout the month.
- € Give information about teen dating violence or healthy relationships on your daily announcements. Sample announcements and statistics are on page 7 – 9 of this document.
- € Read a collection of the winning poetry and short essay entries from the 2009 KNOW LOVE writing contest. Check with your English teacher or librarian for a copy.
- € Write a story on teen dating violence for your school newspaper.
- € Start a healthy relationships club (get your school counselor to advise you).
- € Hold a healthy relationships themed dance, or incorporate the healthy relationships theme into your school's Valentine's Day dance. Have everyone wear a button or a statement about a healthy relationship as part of admission.
- € Create a healthy relationships paper chain (using strips of colored paper) to be hung around your school. Students committing to healthy relationships can sign their name on or decorate a strip of paper or write a quality about a healthy relationship on the paper. The strips can be stapled together to create a chain.
- € Deconstruct media – have a large area where teens can write down lyrics about healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships, or identify healthy or unhealthy relationships in popular television, books, or movies such as *Glee*, *Gossip Girl*, *New Moon*, or others! Consider using the *Sound Relationships Nutritional Label* developed by Start Strong Boston Teens attached to this handout.
- € Conduct a school survey (make sure you have permission!) on the use of cell phones and social networking sites (Facebook, My Space) and healthy and unhealthy relationships.

English, American Government, or Social Studies Activities

- € Have high school students participate in the 2nd Annual Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project What We Love writing contest. Check on the website for more information. Encourage your English teacher to work with the students.
- € Have students study the changing roles of men and women throughout the last century in our society and discuss how changing roles may affect power and control in teen relationships.
- € Deconstruct popular media – television shows, music, books, and movies – what messages are teens given about healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- € Start a healthy relationships **book club – *Dreamland* by Sarah Dessen** is a great book (we suggest you work with your librarian or English teacher closely on this activity). Spoiler alert! Some of the questions contain key elements of the plot. Do not read if you don't want to know what happens!
 - How does Cass's running away affect the entire family?
 - What clues are present in the first chapter that foreshadows the violence to come?
 - What is Caitlin's dreamland? How does she find it?
 - Who else in the novel is in dreamland?
 - How do the next door neighbors, Boo and Stewart, bring balance to Caitlin's family?
 - What attracts Caitlin to Rogerson in the first place? Why do you think she stays with him, even after he starts abusing her?
 - How does Caitlin's drug use affect her decision making?
 - What were the warning signs that Rogerson might be violent?
 - What do Corinna and Caitlin have in common? Why are they friends? What do you think Corinna's character symbolizes in this story?
 - Caitlin is tempted several times to tell her mother what is going on with Rogerson. Why can't she? Find various places in the story where she almost does. Discuss what is happening in each scene and what prevents her from sharing.
 - Rogerson is at the same time tender, loving, violent, and abusive. Discuss what motivates Rogerson. How do you think he rationalizes his behavior? How does Caitlin rationalize hers?
 - Caitlin slowly descends into this abusive relationship. Was it believable to you as a reader? Can you understand how she found herself in this situation?
 - How does Caitlin leave her dreamland?
 - What did you think of Caitlin's parents? Did you blame them at all for her situation?
 - If your friend told you that their romantic partner was physically abusing them, how would you react? Would it be different after having read this novel?

Portions of this discussion guide are credited to *Dreamland: A Reader's Companion* by Patty Campbell and published by Viking Children's Books

- € In small groups, research the legal ramifications of teen dating violence in Idaho (types of violence, consequences, ability of victim to get a protection order, etc). As a class, discuss how teen dating violence would affect the abuser.
- € Have students create a reflection journal. Throughout the month students can use the journal to answer questions on teen dating violence and healthy relationships provided by your teacher.
- € Hold a teen dating violence or healthy relationships themed essay or short story contest.

Health or Teen Living Class Activities

- € Invite a guest speaker to talk to your class about teen dating violence, healthy relationships, and/or the use of digital technology in relationships.

Physical Education Class

- € Incorporate the basketball drills on healthy relationships into PE – log on to www.startstrongidaho.com to download the basketball drills.

Broadcast Media Class Activities

- € Create PSAs about teen dating violence or healthy relationships to be shown on your daily announcements.
- € Create a short video on teen dating violence or the importance of healthy teen relationships.

Other Arts and Humanities-Based Activities

- € Have a healthy relationships or teen dating abuse themed poster or t-shirt design contest.
- € Have a door design contests where the student body chooses which classroom door has the best message on healthy relationships. The doors can stay decorated throughout the month of February.
- € Have students rate popular music, video games, television shows, or other media as depicting healthy or unhealthy relationships. Use the *Sound Relationships* nutritional label provided in your materials box, to collect responses.
- € Have your drama class develop structured improvisations with specific key ideas on teen dating violence and healthy relationships. The group can perform the skits for classmates, and post-performance discussions can be used as opportunities to explore the issues presented.
- € Create a “Mural of Health.” The mural can be created by art classes on posterboard, paper, plywood panels, or other surface – as long as you have permission. The mural can be displayed in your school throughout the month of February.

Sporting Events

- € Have an information booth set up near the event entrance. Hand out the materials (stickers, buttons, etc.) provided in your materials box.
- € Have everyone attending the game enter the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline number into their phone at halftime - 1 866 331-9474.

Movie Nights at School or Youth Organizations

- € Have a movie night with a group discussion at your school or youth organization. Here are some ideas for movies and questions! Consider inviting a panel and include your health teacher, school counselor, School Resource Officer, school nurse, community advocate from a domestic violence shelter program, or others.

Twilight – PG-13, Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, 2008

A teenage girl risks everything when she falls in love with a vampire.

1. Edward is ferociously attracted to Bella by her smell. That may make his love unconditional (because she can't change the smell of her blood), but does it make it less admirable since it's not based on character?
2. Would you want to date Edward? Why? What qualities does Edward have that would make him a good boyfriend? What qualities does he have that would

make him a bad boyfriend. Would your answer be the same if Edward was human?

3. Does Bella seem like a good girlfriend? Why? Would she be interesting to date?

Riding in Cars with Boys – PG-13, Drew Barrymore, 2001

A single mother, with dreams of becoming a writer, has a son at the age of 15 in 1965, and goes through a failed marriage with the drug-addicted father.

1. Were there warning signs that the relationship between Bev and Ray would not health? What were some of those signs?
2. Bev tells Ray that he is not the guy she is supposed to end up with and that staying with him will derail her life ... why did she stay with him?
3. Did Ray support Bev in their relationship? Did he allow her to pursue her dreams? Is it normal to have to give up things you love to stay in a relationship?

Nick & Norah's Infinite Play List – PG-13, Kat Dennings, Alexis Dziena, Michael Cera, 2008

High school student Nick O'Leary, member of the Queercore band The Jerk Offs, meets college-bound Norah Silverberg and she asks him to be her boyfriend for five minutes.

1. Do you think Caroline is a good friend? Why or why not?
2. Do you think Norah is a good friend? Why or why not?
3. Would Nick make a good boyfriend? What qualities does Nick have that would make him a good boyfriend?
4. Would Norah make a good girlfriend? What qualities does Norah have that would make her a good girlfriend?
5. Nick and Norah have both had bad experiences in past relationships. Do you think they are ready for new ones? When you have been in an unhealthy relationship how do you know you are ready for a new one and how do you ensure it is healthy?

Juno – PG 13, Ellen Page, Michael Cera, Jason Bateman, Jennifer Garner, 2007

Faced with an unplanned pregnancy, an offbeat young woman makes an unusual decision regarding her unborn child.

1. Juno asked her dad at one point in the movie, just tell me that love lasts forever...Do you think that love can last forever or is this just a fairy tale message that doesn't work today?
2. Do you feel that Juno purposely left Bleeker out of all the steps regarding her pregnancy including the decision of adoption...how might a couple in a healthy relationship handle this differently? Would it change anything?
3. At one point Bleeker asked, am I your boyfriend? Is a strong relationship and commitment needed before a sexual relationship?
4. Was going to Prom cheating on Juno?
5. What signs did you see in Vanessa & Mark's relationships that made you feel uncomfortable about their marriage? Was this just because of the baby coming? Who was the controller in that relationship?
6. Juno's parents seemed quite cool about the whole situation, how do you think their relationship was and what factors makes you think it was strong?

Activities to avoid

Please avoid the following:

- € Focusing activities on domestic violence. Instead, focus on the importance of healthy teen relationships and the signs of teen dating abuse – verbal abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and physical abuse. Don't focus on just the physical abuse, many teens are in abusive relationships that are verbally, emotionally, and sometimes, sexually abusive.
- € School assemblies on this topic can be difficult. Small class room presentations are more effective and fun!
- € Fundraisers for school or community organizations. However, if the activity is tied in with another pre-existing fundraiser that is okay. For example, some school based organizations sell roses or candy grams during the week of Valentine's Day – attaching information on teen dating violence and/or healthy relationships to the roses or candy grams would be a great idea!

How to enter the contest

You do not need to notify us, simply begin to plan for one or more activities or events to be conducted during the National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month. Each participating school will need to send the attached form and supporting documentation postmarked by March 15, 2010 to: ICASDV, 300 E. Mallard Drive, Suite 130, Boise, Idaho 83706.

How are the winners selected?

Each submission will be evaluated on the following criteria.

- Percentage of students reached during the month – 30 points
- Effectiveness of message – 40 points
- Creativity of event and/or activity – 30 points

If you have any questions, contact the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence at 208 384-0419 or email kmiller@idvsa.org.



Sample School Announcements and Facts

Week 1 –

As you may have notice there are No Means Know posters up around the school – these posters are up because it is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month. This month the student council will [describe planned events]. Participate in these events and help our school win the What We Love Student Council Contest sponsored by No Means Know.

Facts of the week:

- Dating abuse can be verbal, emotional, sexual, and/or physical.
- 1 in 2 teens in a dating relationship compromise their beliefs to please a dating partner.
- 17.7% of Idaho high school students have been electronically bullied (by way of email, chat room, IM, website, or text messaging) during the last 12 months.

What We Love – Respect

- Are you accepted for who you are in your relationships? No one should make you feel bad about yourself or pressure you into compromising your beliefs.

Song lyric of the week - “Open up your mind and see like me,” from *I’m Yours*, by Jason Miraz.

Week 2 –

It’s the second week of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Week. This week we will be [describe any events to take place this week].

Fact/tip of the week:

- 10.6% of Idaho high school students have been hit, slapped, or physically hurt by their boyfriends or girlfriends during the past year.
- 9.6% of Idaho high school students have been forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse.

- Trust your instincts – if you feel unsafe in a relationship you probably are. Know that danger is often the highest when you are ending a relationship and you should get help from a trusted adult immediately

What We Love – Safety

- Do you feel emotionally and physically safe in your relationship? You should! Everyone deserves to feel safe. If someone makes you feel bad about yourself, pressures you into unwanted physical contact, or physically hurts you, talk to a trusted adult immediately. [School counselor's name] is always available to help.

Song lyric of the week – “I’ll stand by you. Won’t let nobody hurt you,” from *I’ll Stand by You*, by Carrie Underwood.

Week 3 –

It’s the third week of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Week. This week we will [describe any events to take place this week].

Facts/tip of the week:

- If trapped in an abusive relationship, 73% of teens said they would turn to a friend for help; but only 33% who have been in or known about an abusive relationship said they have told anyone about it.
- If you have a friend who is being abused, know you can help. Listen and support your friend and don’t blame him or her for the abuse. Encourage your friend to seek help and find an adult you can talk to or call the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474.

What We Love – Support

- Does your dating partner care for you and want what is best for you? If not, tell your friends that what is best for them may not always be best for you.

Song lyric of the week – “I’m the one who makes you laugh when you know you’re ‘bout to cry,” from *You Belong with Me* by Taylor Swift.

Week 4 –

This is the last week of National Teen Dating Awareness & Prevention Month. To end the month with a bang we will be [discuss any activities that are taking place this week].

Fact/tip of the week:

- One in four teens (24%) reported feeling pressure to date – 14% said they would do almost **anything** to keep a boyfriend or girlfriend.

- Anyone can be involved in an abusive dating relationship. Know that if you are being abused you might think it is your fault – it's not!

What We Love – Individuality

- Do you pretend to like something you don't or be someone you aren't to make your relationship work? You shouldn't have to give up old friends or activities just to make your relationship work. Don't lose sight of who you are – be yourself; after all, being an individual is what makes you interesting!

Song lyric of the week – “She got her own thing that’s why I love her,” from *Miss Independent* by Ne-yo.

SAMPLE MAYOR PROCLAMATION – 2010

WHEREAS, the youth of [Name of City] are [Name of City]’s most precious resource and greatest hope for the future, and ensuring their safety, well-being, positive development, and growth into healthy citizens is a priority and a responsibility that we all share; and

WHEREAS, nationwide surveys conducted in 2006 and 2007 examined teen dating relationships and experiences, and findings show that a high incidence of violence and abuse occurs among teens – including verbal, emotional, sexual, and physical violence; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Idaho Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports that 10.6% of Idaho high school students have been hit, slapped, or physically hurt by their boyfriends or girlfriends during the past year and 9.6% of Idaho high school students have been forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse;

WHEREAS, digital abuse and “sexting” are becoming a new frontier for teen dating abuse and 17.7% of Idaho high school students report being electronically bullied in the last 12 months; and

WHEREAS, teen dating violence is a reality for many teenagers and an issue that many parents are unaware of; and

WHEREAS, violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications for victims, who are at higher risk for alcohol and drug abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide, and adult re-victimization; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Project provides free presentations on teen dating violence and Start Strong Idaho provides free presentations on building healthy teen relationships at our secondary schools and in our communities and it is critical that we inform Idaho teens on the warning signs of an abusive relationship, where to find help, the importance of healthy relationships; and

WHEREAS, Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month provides an excellent opportunity for citizens to learn more about the importance of healthy teen relationships and preventing teen dating violence and to show support for the organizations and individuals who provide critical prevention work and advocacy, services, and assistance to victims;

NOW, THEREFORE, I [Name of Mayor], Mayor of [Name of City], Idaho, do hereby proclaim February 2010 to be:

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS & PREVENTION WEEK

in [Name of City].