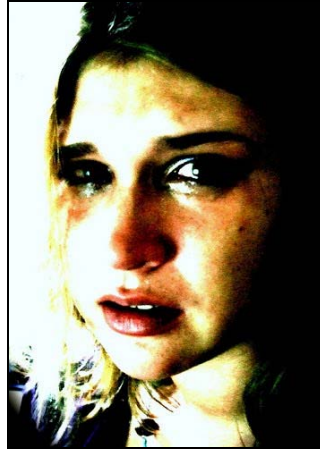


February is Teen Dating Violence Prevention & Awareness Month



Domestic violence is not a problem just for adults. Teens experience domestic violence in their relationships, too. In fact, domestic violence is very common in teen dating relationships.

Here are some important facts:

- **1 in 3** teens experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships, including verbal and emotional abuse.
- **40%** of teenage girls ages 14 to 17 know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by their partner.
- **10.7%** of Knox County high school students report that they have been hit, slapped or physically hurt by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the past year (YRBS, 2011)
- **80%** of girls who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser.
- Only **33%** of teens who were in an abusive relationship ever told anyone about it.
- **81%** of parents surveyed either believe that teen dating violence is not an issue or admit that they don't know if it is an issue.
- **1 in 4** teenage girls who have been in relationships reveal they have been pressured to perform oral sex or engage in

intercourse.

- **10.1%** of Knox County high school students report that, at some point in their lives, they were physically forced to have sexual intercourse with they did not want to (YRBS, 2011).

What is Dating Violence?



Dating Violence is a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of - or actually uses - physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.

Physical Abuse: hitting, slapping, pinching, strangling, throwing objects, shoving, pushing, biting, punching, pulling hair

Emotional Abuse: name-calling, guilt, yelling, criticizing, humiliating, intimidation, mind games, destroying property, blaming, harming pets, threatening, isolation, insulting

Sexual Abuse: forcing sex, unwanted touching, accusing of cheating, not allowing birth control or protection

Textual Harassment: The Growing Weapon in Dating Violence



Textual harassment is marked by excessive, repeated and threatening text messages. Texting makes repeatedly contacting the victim easier because it is private and hard to

block. Victims often feel compelled to answer the messages - texts arrive in class, at the dinner table, in movie theaters - sometimes more than 100 per day.

Here are some important facts:

- **1 in 4** teens has been harassed, called names or put down by a dating partner over cell phone or text message.
- **1 in 3** teens say they are text messaged up to 30 times an hour by a partner or ex-partner inquiring where they are, what they are doing or who they are with.
- **67%** of parents were unaware that their teens had dating partners check up on them 30 times a day on their cell phones.
- Nearly **1 in 4** teens in a relationship communicated with their partner by cell phone or text messaging hourly between midnight and 5:00 a.m.

Signs That a Teen May Be in an Abusive Relationship

- Withdraws from family and friends
- Stops participating in activities and hobbies
- Makes excuses for their partner's behavior
- Is afraid of making their partner angry
- Dramatic changes in weight, appearance or grades (signs of depression)
- Uses drugs or alcohol
- Has unexplained injuries or bruises

Did you know that girls in abusive relationships are....

- 4 to 6 times more likely to become pregnant?
- 2 times more likely to report an STD?
- 8 to 9 times more likely to attempt suicide?



If you or someone you know is experiencing dating violence, help is available –



- 24-hour Family Violence Helpline 865.521.6336
- Knoxville Family Justice Center 865.215.6800 or www.fjcknoxville.org
- Family Crisis Center 865.637.8000
- Sexual Assault Center of East TN 865.522.7273 or www.saceten.org
- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline 866.331.8453 or www.loveisrespect.org

For more information, go to www.breakthecycle.org

