

Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley



What Do You Need to Know About *Teen Dating Violence*?

1 in 3 young people will experience dating abuse - only 1 in 3 speak out.

Dating Violence Can Take Many Forms

- Verbal: yelling, name-calling, put-downs
- Emotional: spreading rumors, lying, possessiveness
- Psychological: manipulation, mind games, guilt-tripping
- Physical: shoving, hitting, punching
- Sexual: unwanted touching

Why Teens Don't Tell Parents or Friends About The Violence

They are embarrassed and ashamed.

They are afraid of being hurt by their partner.

They are convinced that it's their fault or that they will be blamed.

They believe being involved with someone is the most important thing in their life.

They confuse jealousy with love and do not realize they are being abused.

What You Can Say To Your Teen

"I care about what happens to you. I love you and I want to help."

"If you feel afraid, it may be abuse. Sometimes people behave in ways that are scary and make you feel threatened - even without using physical violence. Pay attention to your gut feelings."

"The abuse is not your fault. You are not to blame. Your partner should not be doing this to you."

"It is the abuser who has a problem, not you. It is not your responsibility to help this person change."

"It's important to talk about this. If you don't want to talk with me, find someone you trust and talk with that person. You can also talk to someone at a hotline who can help you sort things out."

Warning Signs of Being A Victim of Dating Violence

- Sudden changes in clothes or make-up
- Bruises, scratches, burns, or other injuries
- Failing grades or dropping out of school activities
- Avoiding friends
- Difficulty making decisions
- Sudden changes in mood or personality, becoming secretive
- Avoiding eye contact, having “crying jags”
- Constantly thinking about dating partner
- Using drugs or alcohol

Tips For Parents

Tip: It is never too early to teach self-respect. No one has the right to hit or control anyone else.

Tip: Give your teen a chance to talk. Listen quietly to the whole story.

Tip: If you suspect that your teen is already involved with an abusive partner, tell your teen that you are there to help, not to judge. If your teen does not want to talk with you, help your teen find another trusted adult to talk with.

Tip: Focus on your child; do not put down the abusive partner. Point out how unhappy they seem to be with this person.

Tip: If your teen tries to break up with an abusive partner, advise that the break be definite and final. Support your teen’s decision and be ready to help.

Tip: Take whatever safety measures are necessary. Consider changing class schedules or getting help from the guidance counselor, school principal, or the police if necessary.

Resources For Teens And Adults

Women’s Resource Center of the New River Valley | wrcnrv.org

Break the Cycle | breakthecycle.org

Futures Without Violence | futureswithoutviolence.org

Love Is Respect | loveisrespect.org | Hotline: 1.866.331.9474 | Text ‘loveis’ to 22522

