

## ABC's of Teen Dating Violence

Anyone can be a victim of dating violence. It doesn't matter if you're wealthy or not, religious or not, straight or not. It makes no difference what race or ethnic background you are. Anyone can be a victim. Anyone can be an abuser.

**Be safe.** Be a survivor, not a victim. Understand the three types of abuse.

**Control.** Abuse is about control, not love. Learn the difference.

Dating violence is a consistent pattern of verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse can be more serious than physical abuse. Does your partner call you names? Humiliate you? Isolate you from your friends? Make all the decisions? Threaten you? Make you afraid?

Family and friends can help you. Don't keep any abuse secret. The more people who know, the safer you are.

**Get help.** You are not alone.

Help your friends who may be victims. They need you as a friend now more than ever.

Intervention and prevention begin with you. Do not accept any abuse from anyone or to anyone.

Judges know the problems of dating violence. If you have to get an order of protection to be safe—do it.

Kicking, hitting, and punching are types of physical abuse. One time is too many.

Love should be special. It is never controlling. It is never about one person telling the other person what to think, do, or how to act.

Murder is the ultimate horror of dating violence. It is the cause of 24% of teen homicides.

No one likes being hit. Victims are afraid to leave abusers because they are afraid of being hit harder. Leave. Be a survivor.

Orders of protection tell the abusers what they can and cannot do. Call the County Clerk's Office for more information. In King County the number is 206-296-9300.

Physical abuse doesn't always leave bruises, but it always leaves scars.

Qualified advocates are available to help victims of teen dating violence. If you need to talk to someone, contact EDVP's 24-hour crisis line at 1-425-746-1940 or 1-800-827-8840 (V/TTY available 8am-5pm). Our trained volunteers and advocates offer resources including crisis intervention, safety planning, emotional support and information about domestic violence.

Read and remember everything you can about dating violence. It could be a lifesaver.

Sexual abuse can be anything from ruining your reputation, to touching you improperly, to rape.

**Tell.** The abuser wants you to think no one will believe you. The abuser wants you to think no one else cares about you. The abuser is wrong. People believe. People care. Abuse should not be a secret. Tell.

**Understand that you are not alone:** friends, family, teachers, the police, judges, are all there to help.

**Victory is in becoming a survivor.** You do not have to be a victim. Only you can begin to make that change.

**Winning the battle against teen dating violence is everyone's job.** Listen to your friends. Share this information with anyone who may need it. You can make a difference.

**X-rays don't show all the hurt.** Teen dating violence hurts everyone. Help stop the hurt.

**Yearly, about 40% of all teens are dating violence victims.** Don't be a statistic.

**Zero tolerance is the only acceptable level of teen dating violence.**

Source: Office of Circuit Court of Cook County, IL