

February



National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Sponsor: Break the Cycle (<http://www.breakthecycle.org/>) 

More than 1 in 10 teens who have been on a date have also been physically abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the last year. Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is a national effort to raise awareness and protect teens from violence.

You can make a difference: Encourage schools, community-based organizations, parents, and teens to come together to prevent teen dating violence.

How can Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month make a difference?

We can use this month to raise awareness about teen dating violence and take action toward a solution – both at home and in our communities.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage parents to talk with their teens about healthy relationships.
- Ask teachers to hold classroom discussions about dating violence and prevention – or to invite speakers in to talk about these issues.
- Help schools create policies that support healthy relationships and involve student voices.

How can I help spread the word?

We've made it easier for you to make a difference. This toolkit is full of ideas to help you take action today. For example:

- Add information about teen dating violence to your newsletter.
- Tweet about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.
- Add a Web badge to your website.
- Join us in showing your support for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (<http://www.teendvmonth.org/across-the-nation>). 

Get the Word Out

Sample Announcement for Newsletter, Listserv, or Media Release

Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. **[Your organization]** wants you to know that there's a lot you can do as a parent to prevent teen dating violence and abuse.

More than 1 in 10 teens who have been on a date have also been physically abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the last year. One of the most important things you can do is keep the lines of communication open with your kids.

Take steps to make a difference:

- Be a role model – treat your kids and others with respect.
- Start talking to your kids about healthy relationships early – before they start dating.
- Get involved with efforts to prevent dating violence at your teen's school.
- If you are worried about your teen, call the National Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 77054.

You can help keep your loved ones safe and healthy.

- **[Add details about your local activities.]**
- **[Include quote from your organization.]**

For more information, visit **[insert your organization's information]**.

Sample Tweets

- 1 in 10 teens who date have been physically abused by someone they've gone out with. Make a difference: <http://bit.ly/WHenrB> 
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/a3P90> 
- February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Learn more: <http://1.usa.gov/bfPeDu> #datingviolence 
 - Tweet this message: http://ctt.ec/R_BtQ 
- Help your kids learn about healthy dating relationships: <http://1.usa.gov/W8OdLp>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/LYzA9> 
- Be a role model – treat your partner and your kids with respect: <http://1.usa.gov/13HpnbE>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/bGELu> 
- Teach your kids the facts about their bodies, sex, and relationships: <http://1.usa.gov/R3ou97>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/9a4jE> 
- Start talking to your kids about relationships when they're young – share your values and expectations: <http://1.usa.gov/Vqx8ig>
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/cUH35> 
- Worried about your child's relationship? Check out ways to help: <http://bit.ly/L2Q1q3> 
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/6NkGw> 
- If you know a young adult in an abusive relationship, text or call @loveisrespect's helpline: <http://bit.ly/1cdN3gk>  #datingviolence
 - Tweet this message: <http://ctt.ec/UjXMc> 

Web Badge

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month – Talk to your kids about respect.
(<http://healthfinder.gov/NHO/nhoBadges.aspx#january>)

Get Involved

Take action to increase awareness about teen dating violence.

1. Write a letter to a public official – like a mayor or governor – asking them to recognize Teen Dating Violence Month (<http://www.teendvmonth.org/write-a-letter>). 
2. Host an event, like a play or a poetry slam, to raise awareness in your community (<http://www.teendvmonth.org/host-an-event>). 
3. Join a group that supports the movement against dating abuse (<http://www.teendvmonth.org/join-a-group/>). 
4. Share materials from loveisrespect about healthy relationships and the warning signs of abuse (<http://www.loveisrespect.org/download-materials>). 
5. If you are concerned about a teen you know, reach out for support (<http://www.loveisrespect.org/for-someone-else/help-my-child/>).

Adapted from Break the Cycle.

Contact [Break the Cycle](#)  or email teenDVmonth@breakthecycle.org for more information and materials.

Share These Resources

Health Topics

- Talk with Your Teen about Healthy Relationships
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/parenting/healthy-communication-and-relationships/talk-with-your-teen-about-healthy-relationships>)
- Talk to Your Kids about Sex
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/parenting/healthy-communication-and-relationships/talk-to-your-kids-about-sex>)
- Talk to Your Kids about Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/parenting/healthy-communication-and-relationships/talk-to-your-kids-about-tobacco-alcohol-and-drugs>)
- Help Someone in an Unhealthy Relationship: Quick tips
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/everyday-healthy-living/mental-health-and-relationship/help-someone-in-an-unhealthy-relationship-quick-tips>)
- Take Steps to Protect Yourself from Relationship Violence
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/everyday-healthy-living/mental-health-and-relationship/take-steps-to-protect-yourself-from-relationship-violence>)

Personal Health Tools

- Healthy Relationship Quiz for Girls
(<http://girlshealth.gov/relationships/quizzes/index.html>)
- Healthy Relationship Quiz for Teens
(http://www.loveisrespect.org/images/quizzes/LIR_Quiz_HealthyRelationship.swf) 
- Communication Tips for Parents
(http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/communication/comm_13_to_18.html) 
- Break the Silence: Stop the Violence Video
(<http://www.cdc.gov/CDCTV/BreakTheSilence/index.html>)

Other Resources

- Dating Violence
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/FindServices/SearchContext.aspx?topic=14754>)
- Domestic Violence
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=253>)
- Teen Mental Health
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=5013>)

Healthy People Topic Areas

- Adolescent Health
(<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=2>)
- Injury and Violence Prevention
(<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=24>)

Find More Information

- Prevent Teen Dating Violence
(<http://www.cdc.gov/features/datingviolence/>)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Understanding Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet [PDF – 313 KB]
(<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/TeenDatingViolence2012-a.pdf>)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Take Action
(<http://www.loveisrespect.org/take-action/take-action>) 
loveisrespect.org
- Healthy Relationships
(<http://www.loveisrespect.org/dating-basics/healthy-relationships>) 
loveisrespect.org
- Learn About Dating Violence
(<http://www.breakthecycle.org/learn-about-dating-violence>) 
Break the Cycle
- Violence Against Women
(<http://www.womenshealth.gov/violence-against-women/types-of-violence/dating-violence.html>)
Office on Women's Health
- Healthy Relationships
(<http://girlshealth.gov/relationships/index.html>)
Office on Women's Health
- Healthy Relationships: Resources and Publications
(<http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/publications/healthy-relationships.html>)
Office of Adolescent Health
- Safety Planning
(<http://www.loveisrespect.org/get-help/safety-planning>) 
loveisrespect.org

Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials. (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure he or she is available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local-access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.

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- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.
- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, libraries, post offices, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.

Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic email alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer email alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

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Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at healthfinder.gov. You can contact us at info@nhic.org or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/healthfinder>). 



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