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New Mexico Victims' Rights Bulletin

TEEN-DATING VIOLENCE

According to a series of articles by the American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Domestic Violence, 40% of girls said that they knew someone or have themselves been abused. There are several factors that contribute to relationship violence:



- Gender stereotypes. "Many traditional stereotypes exist in our society regarding appropriate gender roles for men and women. Young people learn these stereotypes from the time they are born and often perpetuate them by adopting such beliefs in their own lives through their actions and attitudes."
- Intergenerational violence. "Children who are exposed to violence in their own homes often *believe* that violence is an acceptable means of conflict resolution. These children are much more likely to become either the perpetrators or victims of domestic violence in the future."
- Silence. "People are hesitant to talk about or address the issue of teen dating violence. Because dating violence occurs within an intimate relationship, many people are reluctant to get involved. Similarly, while most people agree that abuse in any relationship is wrong, few people ever stand up and speak out about it. In addition, young people and old people alike may be unable to recognize the signs or characteristics of an abusive relationship. Educating people about this issue is one step towards fighting against it and sending the message that teen dating violence will not be tolerated."

"WARNING SIGNS OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP"

Does your boyfriend or girlfriend...

- Discourage you from pursuing your own interests?
- Act extremely jealous when you talk to other people, always page you, or demand to know whom you are with?
- Embarrass you in front of his/her or your friends, call you names or make fun of you?
- Try to get you drunk, high or messed up?
- Force you to do anything sexually that you don't want to do, talk about sex like it is a game or a contest, talk negatively about people in sexual ways?
- Make you afraid to say no to him/her? Scare and threaten you if you don't agree?
- Try to control you by being bossy, giving orders, making all the decisions, telling you what to wear, what to do, who to hang out with and not taking your opinions seriously?
- Blame other people for his/her problems. Say that it's your fault when he/she hurts you?
- Are friends and family uneasy about the relationship or concerned for your safety?

Have you...

- Lost interest in things that used to be important to you, such as sports, friends, or other activities?
- Apologized for your partner's behavior when he/she has done something wrong to you?
- Had a change in weight, appearance or grades since dating this person?
- Been worried about upsetting your partner or do you feel scared or worried about doing or saying the wrong thing?
- Stopped hanging out with friends you had before you started dating?
- Noticed a loss of confidence about yourself when you are with him/her?
- Found yourself changing your behavior out of fear or to avoid a fight?

WHAT IS A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

A relationship where there is gender equality and both partners:

- Give and take, willing to compromise.
- Respect each other and their opinions.
- Support and encourage the other's goals and ambitions.
- Encourage each other to have friends outside the relationship.
- Communicate openly and honestly.
- Accept the differences between them.
- Trust one another.
- Have their own feelings/opinions and are able to express them.
- Behavior is non-threatening.
- Share responsibility in decision-making.
- Talk out their problems.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CLICK ON ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING LINKS:

- cdv@staff.abanet.org
- www.endabuse.org
- www.hawc.org/topics/teen/teens.html
- http://www.parentteen.com/epidemic_of_teen_dating_violence.htm
- www.wcstx.com/teens.htm
- www.newhopeforwomen.org/teens.htm
- www.ci.boulder.co.us/police/prevention/teen_dating.htm

RAISING AWARENESS OF TEEN DATE VIOLENCE

Breaking the silence about teen-date violence is an important step in raising awareness about this problem. The ABA suggests a variety of ways young people can get involved.

- Refuse to accept any form of violence towards yourself or others.
- Plan events at your school to raise awareness about teen dating violence through your connection with clubs, athletic teams, and other community groups.
- Talk to faculty or administration about having a school-wide forum to discuss issues surrounding teen dating violence.
- Organized a clothing/toiletries drive for a local battered woman's shelter.
- Have a local crisis center/battered women's shelter come to your school and do a program on teen dating violence.
- Create bulletin boards in the school cafeteria or classroom to raise awareness.

Crime Victim Resources (Bernalillo County)

Albuquerque Police Department	242-2677
Bernalillo County Sheriff's Dept.	798-7000
NM State Police, Albuquerque area	841-9256
District Attorney's Office	841-7100
District Attorney's Victim Impact	841-7020
NM Crime Victims' Reparations	841-9432
MADD	255-2955
DWI Resource Center	881-1084
UNM Crisis Center	277-3013
Rape Crisis Center	266-7711
Hopeline national suicide hotline	(800) 247-1121
Child Protective Services	841-7800
Adult Protective Services	841-4500
Survivors of Homicide	232-4099
Women Community Association	247-4219

For resources in your community visit our website at www.nm-victimrights.org

NEW MEXICO VICTIMS' RIGHTS PROJECT

The Victims Rights Project is a joint effort of the DWI Resource Center and other victim organizations.

E-MAIL: vrp@nm-victimrights.org

Website: www.nm-victimrights.org

The New Mexico Victims Rights' Bulletin is published every other month by the New Mexico Victims' Rights Project. The goal in distributing information, news and updated legislation is to promote justice and healing for crime victims by sharing information and fostering sensitivity within the justice system. Question regarding content may be directed to Linda Atkinson, Executive Director at (505) 292-2838.

- Ask your school librarian to purchase books about living without violence and the cycles of domestic violence.
- Volunteer at your local sexual assault center.
- Volunteer to baby sit at a local battered women's shelter.
- Seek out education on violence against women and teach others what you learn.
- Research. Know the law and your rights – contact local and state representatives to change outdated laws.
- Ask a team or club to show their support for raising awareness about the issue by making banners and posters in connection with an upcoming event.