Know Your Worth



love is respect

2021 TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH • ACTION GUIDE

Welcome to Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM)

What is TDVAM?

TDVAM is a month-long campaign dedicated to raising awareness about teen dating abuse. Every February, young people and their loved ones join together across the country for a national effort to raise awareness about the issue of teen dating violence through Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM). Congress declared the month of February to be National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month in 2010. This annual, month-long push focuses on advocacy and education to stop dating abuse before it starts.



2021 Theme "Know Your Worth"

Why we chose this theme

This year's theme **Know Your Worth** is all about learning about healthy relationships and self-empowerment, and was chosen by college students from across the country. You are worth respect and deserving of a healthy, loving relationship. Our idea with this theme is to empower our audience to learn more about healthy relationships, and to know what they are worth and what they deserve. It is a very powerful, personal statement that guides actions, behaviors, and communication in relationships to be healthy and free from violence. Everyone is deserving of a healthy relationship!

What you should know about dating abuse

The problem

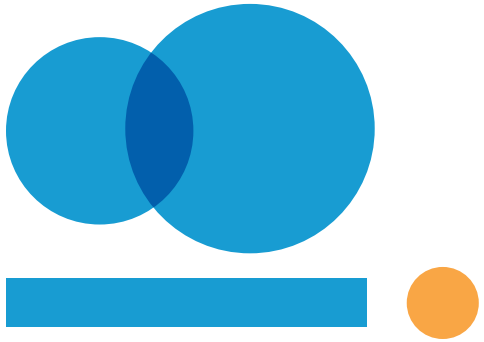
Teen dating violence is more common than many people think. **1 in 3 teens** in the U.S. will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults. Nearly half (43%) of those who identify as college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors. Everyone has the right to a safe and healthy relationship. Dating abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of their age, financial status, race, gender, sexual orientation, or background. With 1 in 3 teens experiencing some form of relationship abuse, and two thirds who never tell anyone, we have to do more to bring awareness to dating violence.

The solution

We have to start talking! By understanding the essential elements of healthy relationships and learning the early warning signs of harmful and abusive behaviors — we can change things for ourselves and those we care about. The first step is to get the right information about healthy relationships and abuse in front of young people.

Building communities of support

This isn't a private issue. We must come together to support those affected by unhealthy relationships and abuse. Isolation is one of the strongest tactics someone uses in exerting power and control over someone else — we must let people know they are not alone. By having each other's backs, we build a community of support and bravely demonstrate that not only do we know our own worth, but also our collective worth.



Take action



Learn what's essential in a healthy relationship

While no two relationships look the same and different people may define relationships in different ways, there are a few key things that must be present in all relationships for it to be **healthy**:

Respect • Equality • Honesty • Trust • Communication • Boundaries • Consent

Learn the warning signs of abuse

Relationships exist on a spectrum and it can sometimes be hard to tell when a behavior goes from healthy to unhealthy or even abusive. Typical **warnings signs** include:

- Checking your phone, email, or social media accounts without your permission.
- Putting you down frequently, especially in front of others.
- Isolating you from friends or family (physically, financially, or emotionally).
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity.
- Explosive outbursts, temper, or mood swings.
- Any form of physical harm.
- Possessiveness or controlling behavior.
- Pressuring you or forcing you to have sex.

Take social media action

Every day is an important day to spread awareness about teen dating violence, but during TDVAM, it's especially important to add your voice. Follow love is respect and like, comment and share our content. Share your own thoughts using #KnowYourWorth. Let your network know that you are participating in TDVAM, and invite them to do the same.

@loveisrespectpage @loveisrespect @loveisrespectofficial

Have a courageous conversation

Whether on campus, online, at home, at work or hanging out, if you see something concerning or notice changes in someone close to you (like no longer posting, absent from class or not texting their friends anymore) — ask questions. Let them know you are a safe space to share their experience without any judgment. It's okay to ease into it — try asking, "Hey, I have noticed you've not been on social media or texting as much, is everything okay?"

How your parents and teachers can take action

Understand this is serious

Sometimes, okay maybe most of the time, it's hard for the adults in our life to relate. However, young people still say parents and teachers are an incredibly important source of support and influence their decisions and choices. If your parent, teacher, or coach suspect that you're in an unhealthy relationship it can be frustrating and frightening for them too. As an adult, their instinct is to help you in whatever way they can, but they just aren't sure how. Here are some tips to share with the adults in your life (we put it in adult speak just for them):

Learn the warning signs of abuse

Learn resources available to help

There are so many great resources, but here are a few, not to mention the very important LGBTQ+ and BIPOC resources listed on page 6.



- **love is respect** has a lot of resources and learning materials for young people and adults, as well as live digital chat. Or, 24/7 you can call 1-866-331-9474 or text LOVEIS to 22522! Parents can even call, chat or text themselves to understand what someone may be going through and learn how to help.
- **Crisis Text Line,** text HOME to 741741 and get support with a variety of issues including abuse, depression and thoughts of suicide.
- RAINN is a 24/7 sexual assault hotline providing victim services for survivors of sexual assault. Call 800-656-HOPE or live chat at **rainn.org**
- Runaway Safeline is here for young people thinking about running away or who already have. They can help teens get to safety or back home too. Call 1-800-786-2929 or live chat at **www.1800runaway.org**.

How to have a courageous conversation

Listen & give support. It can be difficult to open up about abuse, and young people may fear that important adults in their lives will overreact, blame them, or be angry. Adults need to be supportive and non-accusatory and be sure to ask how someone wants to be supported and how you can help, instead of jumping to conclusions and suggestions. Showing skepticism or disbelief can make anyone feel unsupported and isolated. Believe someone when they are brave enough to share their experience with you. You may be the first person they have ever told.



Digital abuse is real

Digital abuse overview

All communication in a healthy relationship is respectful, whether in person, online, or over the phone. It's never okay for your partner to use words or actions to harm you, lower your self-esteem, or manipulate you. **Digital dating abuse** is the use of technologies like texting and social media to bully, harass, stalk, or intimidate a partner. You never deserve to be mistreated, online or in person.

COVID-19 and its impact

So much has changed with this pandemic, and it's been rough for so many people and especially young people. Many of us find ourselves away from campus, school or work, attending classes online and isolated from our family and friends. COVID-19 puts people at higher risk for abuse, especially digital abuse, because nearly everything we do is online. Any external factors that add stress, isolation, and financial strain can create circumstances where safety is further compromised. COVID-19 is a combination of all three and is being used by abusive partners to further control and abuse. This makes it even more important for us to connect with and support those who might be experiencing abuse.

Your community

LGBTQ+ Specific Support

- LGBT National Help Center— serving the LGBTQ+ Community by providing free and confidential peer support and local resources. Call 1-800-246-7743 or chat at **www.glbthotline.org**
- Brown Boi Project— is a community of people working across race and gender to eradicate sexism, homophobia and transphobia and create healthy framework of masculinity and change. **www.brownboiproject.org**
- Scarleteen— inclusive, comprehensive, supportive reproductive and relationships info for teens. **www.scarleteen.com**
- The Trevor Project— provides 24/7 confidential crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ young people under 25. Call: 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678-678 or chat live at **www.thetrevorproject.org**

Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color Specific Support

- Heart— ensures that Muslims have the resources, language, and choice to nurture sexual health and confront sexual violence. **www.hearttogrow.org**
- StrongHearts— free, confidential, and culturally-relevant support for Native American and Alaska Native teens and young adults experiencing dating abuse and sexual violence is available every day from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. CST.
  Call: 844.7NATIVE (762.8483) or chat live at **www.strongheartshelpline.org**



love is respect is here for you

love is respect

Mission

love is respect is an initiative that engages, educates, and empowers young people to prevent and end abusive relationships. love is respect was established in 2007 by the National Domestic Violence Hotline in response to a national discourse about the need for prevention services, especially among teens.

love is respect is a safe, inclusive space where teens and young adults can access information and get support in an environment designed specifically for them.

To Learn More

All of our resources, including live-advocate support, are free, confidential and 24/7/365

1.866.331.9474 **loveisrespect.org** **LOVEIS to 22522**

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