Empowering Youth & Communities to End Teen Dating Violence

Includes links to

- Classroom exercises
- Community activities
- Videos & much more
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**Introduction**

This resource guide was designed by the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence to be a resource for those working with or seeking to work with teens in their local communities, school systems, or other youth organizations around the issue of teen dating violence.

The information shared in this guide contains electronic links to tangible/hands-on activities for teens, things to consider when reaching out to teens and working with communities, and ways to engage adults.

GCADV encourages advocates and community leaders to always use activities and resources which will best meet the needs of the communities they serve.

Resources shared in this guide are for informational purposes only and do not reflect the views of GCADV.

**Overview of Teen Dating Violence**

**What is Teen Dating Violence?**

Also referred to as adolescent dating abuse, teen dating violence is any behavior used by an individual to gain control, manipulate, intimidate, frighten, or gain power over an individual with whom they have an emotional interest in, intimate interaction with, or ongoing intimate dating relationship with. Due to the constantly evolving dynamics of teen behaviors and interactions, teen dating violence can be experienced in a variety of ways and can often present great complexity when victims attempt to seek safety or relief solutions.
Factors Influencing Teens

The reality that there are many community, social, and individually unique dynamics influencing teen behaviors demonstrates that efforts to address teen dating violence must be diverse.

When building teen dating violence prevention or intervention efforts, it is important to keep in mind the dynamics of teen’s experiences, interactions, and global influencers. Factors such as social expectations, entertainment media messages about relationships, and constant social media engagement can impact how teens individually perceive teen dating relationships and engage in conversations around teen dating violence. Their constantly changing social circles, constant digital world connection, lack of dating experience, and frequency of media messages from peers of similar age can all greatly influence their views on dating violence and dating in general.

Additionally, the types of relief options available to teens as well as the barriers to safety they are faced with, can differ from adults. In teen communities, the hyper importance of peer acceptance can have great impact on a teen disclosing experiences of dating violence. Their lack of legal autonomy, lack of or cautious trust of adults and authority figures, and lack of age appropriate interventions can all impact and produce different experiences and safety outcomes for them.

Cultural influencers, expectations, and norms can also be very impactful on some teens. This may be especially true for teens who identify with immigrant communities and communities of color. Teens identifying with specific cultural populations may be heavily influenced by messages of historical values, beliefs, and acceptance communicated within their communities and families. Teens identifying with specific cultural populations may also be conscience of stigma associated with various helping systems, therefore foregoing disclosure of their experience to such
systems or family members due to fear.

These factors can greatly influence their willingness to disclose that they are experiencing dating violence or reveal they are in a relationship.

**Georgia Law & Teen Dating Violence**

**Georgia Law**

Very often the parameters of Georgia’s relationship definition excludes teen victims of dating violence. In Georgia, individuals in dating relationships are excluded from accessing temporary protective orders under the Family Violence Act unless the individuals share a child, currently live in the same household, or have formally lived in the same household.

In cases where minor teen victims dating relationships do fall within the context of Georgia’s family violence definition, protective order relief may be sought by an adult on the minor’s behalf. It is not a requirement that the adult filing on behalf of the minor be related to that individual. However, this path would require the teen seeking relief to disclose the abuse to a guardian or other adult who may be willing to assist them. This could potentially cause further discomfort for the teen victim and make them more apprehensive in coming forward. Additionally, there is no specification in Georgia’s law if the respondent to the petition would be the minor perpetrating the violence or the minor’s parent or guardian. With so much detailed information and guidance missing, those advocating on behalf of teen victims who do pursue these actions should always process with victims all scenarios of how their safety and overall personal well-being may be impacted.

It is important that both victims and those helping understand that, even in seeking such relief, the complex dynamics and unique safety barriers of teens who attend the same school, live in the same neighborhoods, or participate in the same activities may not be addressed.
Teen victims whose relationship does not meet the family violence definition but does include other dynamics of dating violence such as stalking may be able to seek relief under Georgia’s stalking statute. In pursuing relief under Georgia’s stalking statute, teen victims would need to be able to show evidence of a pattern of stalking or harassment.²

As there are complex dynamics involved in applying for either of these relief solutions, it is always highly advisable to seek assistance and expertise from advocacy organizations providing services to victims of domestic and dating violence.

**Accessing Communities & Reaching Teens**

**Georgia Advocacy Organizations Addressing Teen Dating Violence**

As previously mentioned, broaching the subject of dating violence and youth is not one that can be done alone. In reality, it can often be difficult to gain buy in from others and access spaces where teens are.

In Georgia, there are several organizations who have overcome such barriers and are working to raise awareness about teen dating violence in their communities. In addition to raising awareness, many of these organizations are also able to provide unique advocacy services to teens experiencing violence in their relationships. Again, because of the unique dynamics of teen dating violence, these organizations utilize a number of different educational and service techniques when working to address this issue.

The organizations mentioned throughout the next few pages are just a few working to address teen dating violence in Georgia.
Hospitality House

Hospitality House reaches out to local schools and youth groups with the purpose of educating teens on dating violence as a preventative measure. This is done through the use of presentations and Hospitality House’s teen program, “Lose the Drama”.

Presentations are created and facilitated to meet the specific needs of each youth group or school class. Topics covered in presentations for students/youth include the following:

- Definition of healthy, unhealthy, and abusive relationships.
- Red flags and warning signs of abuse, unhealthy relationships
- Barriers of leaving an abusive relationship.
- Information on safe technology practices and media literacy.
- Creative ways to discuss images of gender-based violence in pop culture.
- Tips on what to do if they or someone they know is experiencing abuse.
- Resources on where to get help, including losethedrama.org, created by Hospitality House.

Because statistics show that 1 in 3 teens experience some form of dating abuse, Hospitality House believes it is crucial to engage all members of their community in conversations that may help prevent young people from this dangerous trend. With an eye on what teens are plugged into today and the mission of prevention, their presentation gives adults and/or their adolescent children an overview of dating violence, its prevalence in youth relationships, and age-appropriate use of social media (Facebook, texting, electronic image sharing, etc). Through interactive exercises, facilitators address the ways popular culture impacts societal views of gender roles in relationships and help attendees learn skills to address this issue.
The Beverly Cunningham Outreach Program

The Beverly Cunningham Outreach Program is dedicated to the prevention and intervention of domestic violence through its teen dating violence programs which include:

Teen Dating Violence Forum
* Healthy Relationships
* Unhealthy Relationships
* Sexual Abuse
* Mentor/Mentee Program (New)

Economic Empowerment Forum
* Basic Checking
* Basic Savings
* Importance of Saving
* Financial Planning
* Investments

Saving Our Daughters

Saving our Daughters convenes a number of programs primarily geared toward reaching youth in the community. The organization's "Yell Confidence!" program supports Saving Our Daughters’ mission by working directly with women and men celebrities who have experienced domestic violence or dating abuse. Through community outreach and engagement, the organization uses the highly influential voices of these celebrity partners from music, film, and television backgrounds to raise awareness and give power to the messages of confidence and self-worth.

The Yell Confidence! program includes educational, career, and leadership sessions for teen girls and young women which are facilitated by celebrity and community partners of Saving Our Daughters.
**Circle of Hope**

Circle of Hope strives to break the cycle of domestic violence by educating youth on how to have healthy relationships through the organization's Prevention Program. Established in 2003, this program coordinates with schools, churches, and community groups in Habersham, Stephens, and White Counties to provide educational lessons and awareness initiatives to youth of all ages. Educational lessons are structured to be age-appropriate and include topics such as bullying, teen dating violence, healthy relationships, cyber-bullying and internet safety, and conflict resolution.

In 2012, the agency reached 4,158 youth through those educational lessons. In February 2013, Circle of Hope launched 'Break the Silence', an awareness initiative that challenged high school students in the community to take a stand against teen dating violence. Students were asked to make a short video about the warning signs of dating abuse, signs of a healthy relationship, and how to get help if you or someone you know is being abused.

**Promise Place**

Promise Place provides education to youth through their Teen Dating Violence Prevention Program. This program is presented to primarily 9th grade students in the Griffin Judicial Circuit and helps to educate and provide the resources that students need to both prevent and end teen dating violence. The program utilizes local resources and enlists the assistance of local volunteers to help make the program successful.

Promise Place provides this educational program to over 2,500 students every year.
**Sisters Empowerment Network**

Sisters Empowerment Network, Inc. believes that it is never too early to talk to teens about teen dating violence and healthy relationships. The organization works with teens and parents in the community to raise awareness and bring recognition to the behaviors of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Sisters Empowerment Network’s initiatives include activities that build skill sets around balancing and making conscious choices and having open communication about relationships.

The organization also provides resource information on organizations such as the Safe Place Initiative, a national youth outreach program which educates thousands of young people each year about the dangers of running away or trying to resolve difficult, threatening situations on their own.

**Hope Harbour**

Hope Harbour works with Girls Inc. in Columbus, GA. Through this partnership, the organization teaches the Safe Dates curricula annually to young girls.

In addition to Hope Harbour’s collaboration with Girls Inc., the organization also facilitates healthy relationship classes in their communities local school systems. Information presented in these classes is tailored to be age appropriate and are open to all interested students.

Hope Harbour is very active in the Columbus, Georgia community and often speaks at churches, schools, and youth serving organizations.
The Still Standing Foundation

The Still Standing Foundation provides teen dating violence awareness workshops on a quarterly basis. These workshops are geared towards middle and high school students, youth groups, youth organizations, and church youth groups. Workshops primarily address issues teens face when dating.

Student participants learn the different types of dating abuse, the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, how to set healthy boundaries in dating relationships, and what to do if they find themselves or a friend in a dating violence situation. Additionally, students receive informational handouts and pocket cards that address teen dating violence. Upon workshop completions, students are asked to recite the Teen Dating Violence pledge in which they agree to honor healthy relationships.

Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV)

The Partnership Against Domestic Violence partners with local schools and youth services organizations to raise awareness around the issue of teen dating violence and provide key audience educational opportunities. The organization provides workshops for both teens and adults.

Teen workshops include information around healthy relationships, gender roles, warning signs of dating violence, bystander intervention, and safety planning. Workshops for parents or adults working with teens focus on similar subject matter as well as how to talk with teens about dating violence and available resources for teens experiencing dating violence.

In addition to the efforts mentioned above, PADV convenes a Teen Summit annually for teens and adults. This event covers various topics concerning teen dating violence and draws hundreds of interested youth and adults annually.
**Project Safe Inc.**
Project Safe’s *Breaking Silence* program, launched in December 2012, engages teen audiences ages 13-19 in dating violence education and awareness activities. Through a 24-hour text line managed by UGA 4th year and graduate student interns, teens are able to access knowledge and information around dating do’s and don'ts, stalking, cyber-stalking, emotional abuse, sexual assault reporting, and etc.

Direct service interns managing the text line receive extensive training around domestic violence and dating violence, and are supervised by Project Safe staff.

Additionally, Project Safe coordinates a teen ambassador program at Clarke Middle School in Athens. Through monthly meetings, students are able to address challenges and develop leadership and advocacy skills related to promoting healthy relationships.

The goal of Project Safe’s programs are to establish communication, answer questions, and guide teens to resources for safety.

Information from Project Safe’s *Breaking Silence* program can be accessed via the text line at **706-765-8019** or through email at teensbreakingsilence@gmail.com.
Identify Community Needs and Allies

As demonstrated by the multiple organizations noted in the previous section, taking on efforts which address teen dating violence can not be done alone and requires multiple players. As you aspire to build informed and healthy community and systemic responses to teen dating violence, consider the following approaches.

When taking steps toward addressing teen dating violence, it is important to have a good grasp on what the youth community’s needs are, what engages them, who key allies are, and what stakeholders would be essential and beneficial to include. Work with allies to further identify youth needs in the community and to reach others who share similar concerns or who are already working with the audience in which you want to engage. Most importantly, seek to engage parents and teens as allies and valuable sources of insight. By establishing these relationships, further insight can be gained on current youth behavior patterns, gaps in resources to address behaviors, and what approaches may work best to engage youth. Have a general understanding of what engages these groups to come to the table and remain at the table.

Mainstream allies and stakeholders to consider approaching include youth serving organizations, domestic and sexual violence programs, faith communities, school systems, members of the criminal justice community, and other leaders of influence in the community.

Additionally, consider engaging non-mainstream programs and community organizations as allies. These groups often already have community support and a well established community presence.

Groups to consider may be those with mentor programs (i.e. fraternities and sororities), housing communities, after school programs, and youth recreational groups.
Framing the Issue and Planning Efforts

With ally partners, identify the goals and priorities of taking on efforts to address teen dating violence as well as the challenges which may be encountered in your community.

Work with allies to develop a factual framework that adequately conveys the message, fosters discussions, and supports the argument of why it is important to address the issue in the community you represent or serve. Utilize statistics and other information obtained from local, state, and national resources as guides to support your position, develop frameworks, and engage audiences.

As you work with allies to access communities and reach teens, identify where existing and new efforts can be combined. Additionally, it is important to develop strategies which will assist in overcoming system barriers or community challenges.

As mentioned previously, teen allies are valuable informants to your efforts. They are an essential key to your activity planning and success in keeping teen audiences engaged in the work you are doing. Therefore, the voices of teens should always be present in the process of building frameworks, messaging, planning efforts, and developing strategies to address challenges. Teen involvement can be achieved by having them directly at the table during planning, seeking their feedback around information being shared or activities being planned, and consulting with them around best approaches in reaching their peers.
Resources for the Classroom, Community, and Beyond

As a variety of resources and tools exist and speak to the issue of teen dating violence, the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence does not recommend or endorse any one resource over another. Instead GCADV encourages individuals to utilize the resources which best meet the needs of their audience and community.

The resources mentioned throughout the following sections can be used collectively or separately as tools to assist efforts in addressing teen dating violence. Information ranges from videos and apps to articles specifically designed to engage parents.

**Teen Audience**

**Exercises & Activities**

*Building Healthy Relationships Across Virginia: A Facilitator's Guide*

This facilitator’s guide provides realistic scenario activities for teens and reviewed by teens. Activities focus on elements of healthy relationships, dating red flags, and self image. Primary audiences for activities are middle and high school students.

*Youth Action Committee Preventing Teen Dating Violence Curriculum*
http://www.wcadv.org/sites/default/files/resources/YAC%20Curriculum%20for%20website%20Unit%201%20only.pdf

This curriculum educates teens on the dynamics of teen dating violence, warning signs, elements of power and control, gender norms, and provides scenarios for bystander response. Information presented also includes conflict resolution exercises and scenarios which may be helpful in overcoming barriers which arise when working with teens in classrooms.
“Relationship Status”

This interactive booklet explores topics about relationships including elements of supportive vs. controlling relationships, consent and coercion, and supporting friends who are in controlling relationships. Activities include word searches, quizzes, and discussion questions.

**Videos & Stories of Dating Abuse**

**That’s Not Cool**

- Textual Harassment
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&NR=1&v=uBJvCgCYHfg

  This video is a useful tool in beginning teen dialogue around technology and healthy relationship boundaries, sexting, and controlling behavior.

**See It and Stop It**

- Young Women & Dating Violence
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhuN_dhAW40

  This video highlights characteristics of verbal abuse and encourages friends to know the signs and speak up when they notice signs of abuse occurring.
• Young Men & Dating Violence  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33tslcAHrHY

This video is a useful tool for starting a dialogue around young men holding other young men accountable when they commit acts of dating violence.

Speak Up  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GVcS-2pTQQ&feature=related

This video is one teen’s story of being stalked by her boyfriend and the toll the experience took on her life. In the video, the teenager telling her story describes how the relationship began, how it became abusive over time, and the courage it took for her to speak up.

“I Thought I Had It All”- Teen Dating Violence In NYC  
http://vimeo.com/48973727

This brief documentary takes viewers through the experiences of three teen mothers from diverse backgrounds who experienced teen dating violence. In the documentary, they discuss their backgrounds in relation to their experience with dating violence, the dynamics of abuse present in their relationships, and how they overcame the abuse they were experiencing.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships: Where do you draw the line?  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it7ewj7cpQ4

This video takes viewers through typical conversations that may occur between teens who are dating. The video illustrates both unhealthy and healthy conversation dynamics and opens up the opportunity to ask viewers where they draw the line in their relationship.
So This Is Love?
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFAev3AGWFQ

This short video demonstrates how teen dating violence can progress over the course of a relationship. The video highlights warning signs that may be present in each stage of the relationship and the impact on victims. It also addresses teens talking to parents about what they are experiencing.

Text Monster
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3n-eD_FdPc&feature=autoplay&list=PLA216054F474328D2&playnext=1

This interactive video highlights the use of technology and healthy relationship boundaries. The video is useful in fostering a space for teens to discuss healthy responses when faced with potentially unhealthy relationship behaviors.

Facebook Drama
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yo797fGG2go&feature=relmfu

This interactive video is useful in opening a dialogue about the use of social media and healthy relationship boundaries.

Helping a Friend
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arGdCmkkVXg

This short video demonstrates how friends can open up a dialogue with friends when recognizing signs of dating violence.
**Dating Violence “Wheels”**

*Interactive Teen Power & Control Wheel*
www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/power-and-control-wheel/

This power and control wheel provides examples and is accompanied by videos which demonstrate the forms of abuse. Information presented through videos linked to the wheel provides an opportunity to engage audiences, begin dialogue, and turn attention to helpful tips or responses.

*Teen Equality Wheel*

This wheel specifically focuses on attributes of equality in healthy relationships such as open communication, trust, support, and shared power.

*Teens Experiencing Abusive Relationships Power & Control Wheel*

This wheel provides detailed behaviors that can be present in teen relationships where dating violence is occurring.

*Successful Collaboration Wheel*
www.ncdsv.org/images/successfulcollaborationwheelNOSHADING-NCDSV.pdf

Though primarily geared toward collaboration with law enforcement, this wheel provides helpful information that can be useful to organizations or communities seeking to organize and address the issue of teen dating violence. The wheel names important considerations and elements that are necessary in fostering healthy collaboration.

The site is designed for teens, but it also provides information for educators and interested community members.
Websites

Break the Cycle
- [http://www.breakthecycle.org/](http://www.breakthecycle.org/)

Break the Cycle provides a host of information, including warning signs of dating violence, statistics, “know your rights” information, tools for action, and training information.

Love is Respect
- [http://www.loveisrespect.org/](http://www.loveisrespect.org/)

Love is Respect provides a safe space for teens to access information and assistance. The website is specifically designed for teens.

Teen DV Month

Teendvmonth.org provides ongoing resources and event information for the latest happenings during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in February. The website is a great tool to inform and engage youth in addressing teen dating violence.

Apps

Circle of 6

Circle of 6 is a downloadable iPhone app which can be utilized to inform close contacts where you are in real time. The app also provides information on healthy relationships and pre-programmed hotline information for immediate assistance.
On Watch
http://www.onwatchoncampus.com/

On Watch is another downloadable app which can be used to inform close contacts where you are in real time, reach out for emergency assistance via customized alerts, and provides pre-programmed hotline information.

Tech Safety

NNEDV Safety Net “Tech Savvy Teens” Handout

This handout helps teens think through how their personal information may be shared on the web both voluntarily and involuntarily. The handout also provides tips on removing personal information as well as information on protecting ones privacy.

Parent Audience

Technology & Social Media

Online Communication and Adolescent Relationships

This article uses a research analysis to uncover youth's use of technology and social media. Key focus is placed on the various forms of technology and social media platforms adolescents use, how adolescents use technology to communicate, and the impact this can have on their relationships.
**Videos & Conversation Guides**

*“Let’s Talk” Scenario*
http://vimeo.com/50799658

This video provides tips to parents on how to initiate conversations about healthy relationships.

*“It’s Time to Talk” How to Start A Conversation Guide*

A conversation starter for parents, this guide provides step by step information on how parents can begin having healthy relationship conversations with their children, things parents need to know before beginning conversations, warning signs of dating abuse, conversation starter questions, and other valuable information.

**Apps**

*Love Is Not Abuse*
http://www.breakthecycle.org/lina-app

Specifically for iPhone users, this app is an educational resource for parents which demonstrates the digital dangers or dating abuse and provides information about teen dating violence.

The app is free and can be found in the iTunes App Store under “Love Is Not Abuse.”
Community & Stakeholder Audiences

Miami-Dade TDV Prevention Team Initiative

Provides a detailed overview of the Mimi-Dade county’s efforts to address teen dating violence throughout the county.

FindYouthInfo.gov
FindYouthInfo.gov is the U.S. government web site that helps you create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs. Included are youth facts, funding information, and tools to help you assess community assets, generate maps of local and federal resources, search for evidence-based youth programs, and keep up-to-date on the latest, youth related news.

Center for Disease Control: Dating Matters Initiative

The CDC Dating Matters webpage provides information about the various program components of the Dating Matters Initiative. This initiative uses evidenced based information about methods, programs, and strategies that work in preventing teen dating violence. The initiative’s focus is on youth ages 11-14 in high risk, urban communities.

Veto Violence
http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/

Veto Violence is another tool developed by the CDC to provide individuals training and tools that focus on primary prevention of violence as well as secondary and tertiary prevention. Interactive trainings and resources on the site help participants understand violence in general, the various types of violence, and how violence impacts public health.
U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet for Schools
http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oshs/edtdvfactsheet8-26-13.pdf

Developed specifically for schools, this one page fact sheet housed on the U.S. Department of Education Office of Safety and Healthy Students website provides information such as the extent of teen dating violence in schools, how teen dating violence affects schools, and what schools can do to help. The fact sheet also list numerous resources and publications in which educators can access.

Bowie Texas Independent School District Teen Dating Violence Policy

This twenty page teen dating violence policy for the Bowie Texas Independent School District covers definitions of teen dating violence, victim safety, training and prevention, and school intervention. The document also provides template school based stay away agreements, a community coordination chart, student complaint form, and other resources.

Break the Cycle: Safe Schools Model Policy

This document, developed to assist District of Columbia secondary schools with addressing dating violence and sexual violence among students, provides a model policy covering maintenance of confidentiality, the duty of schools, accommodations for victims, training for employees and students, and accommodating forms used under the developed policy.
Ohio Domestic Violence Network Teen Dating Violence Curriculum Comparison Chart

Created by the Ohio Domestic Violence, this chart compares evidenced based programs, promising practices, and other curricula geared toward working with teens.

Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence Teen Dating Violence Curriculum Comparison Chart

Created by the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence, this chart provides detailed information on multifaceted approaches, curricula, and community mobilization activities geared toward working with teens.
Endnotes


2 Ibid
Collaborate * Advocate * Educate * Empower

114 New Street
Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030