

# DATING *Abuse/Violence*

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence defines teen dating violence as:

A pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, verbal and/or emotional abuse, perpetrated by an adolescent against a current or former dating partner. The abusive teen uses this pattern of violent and coercive behavior—either in a heterosexual or homosexual dating relationship—in order to gain power and maintain control over the dating partner.

## Prevalence

- 1.5 million teens in the U.S. are affected by teen dating violence
- 1 in 5 teens have been in a violent dating situation
- 1 in 2 teens have compromised personal beliefs to please the person they are dating
- 72% of teens have been checked up on by a boyfriend or girlfriend 10 times per hour by email or social networking sites
- 25% of teens have been called names by the person they are dating through text messages



## WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Ask Yourself: Does my boyfriend or girlfriend...

- Tell me what to wear?
- Have to be with me all the time?
- Call me names, insult me, or criticize me?
- Act jealous, possessive, controlling, or bossy?
- Give me orders or make all the decisions?
- Get angry very quickly, or fight a lot?
- Threaten to hurt me or someone in my family if I don't do what they want?
- Threaten to hurt themselves if I don't do what they want?
- Shove, punch, slap, pinch, kick, or hit me? Pull my hair? Strangle me?
- Touch or kiss me when I don't want to?
- Check my email, Facebook or text messages?
- Refuse to accept that the relationship is over or not working?



## CRISIS HOTLINES

- ◆ Denton County Friends of the Family 24-hour Crisis Line (940) 382-7273 or (800) 572-4031
- ◆ National Dating Abuse Helpline 1-866-331-9474
- ◆ Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: 24-hour Family Violence Hotline 1-800-252-5400

*Personal wellness. Empowered students. Promising futures.*

## Electronic Dating Violence

"I call it an electronic leash. I've had girls come into my office with cell phone bills showing 9,000 text messages and calls in a month. This is all hours of the day and night. And it's threatening. 'Hi. How are you? Where are you? Who are you with? Who are you talking to?'"

— Dr. Jill Murray, Psychologist

### If You Are Being Abused You Might...

- ◇ Believe it is your fault
- ◇ Feel angry, sad, lonely, depressed or confused
- ◇ Feel helpless to stop the abuse
- ◇ Feel threatened, humiliated, or ashamed
- ◇ Feel anxious, trapped, or lonely
- ◇ Worry about what might happen next
- ◇ Feel like you can't talk to family or friends
- ◇ Be afraid of getting hurt
- ◇ Feel protective of your boyfriend or girlfriend
- ◇ Feel bad about yourself because your abuser says you are stupid, lazy, worthless, helpless, crazy, or things like that

**There are normal reactions. You are not alone.**



In a survey of kids ages 11 to 18, one in 20 boys admits to having uploaded or shared a humiliating or harassing photo of their romantic partner online. Roughly 10 percent of both boys and girls claim to have received a threatening cell-phone message from a romantic partner. Teens are using their ever-present technology for such maliciousness that a new term had to be coined for it: "electronic dating violence."

<http://www.nbcnews.com/>

**"It's the phenomenon of no place to run and no place to hide. Now, you can be stalked electronically. You can't even see your predator coming."**

— Kevin Jennings,  
Assistant Deputy Secretary,  
US Department of Education

### IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING ABUSED...

- Listen. Show support. Tell your friend you are worried about them.
- Ask how you can help
- Encourage your friend to seek help from parents or campus staff
- Instead of deciding what is best for your friend, help them make their own decisions

### WEB RESOURCES

[www.nedsv.org](http://www.nedsv.org)  
[www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)  
[www.breakthecycle.org](http://www.breakthecycle.org)  
[www.dcof.org](http://www.dcof.org)

[www.tcfv.org](http://www.tcfv.org)  
[www.loveisnotabuse.org](http://www.loveisnotabuse.org)  
[www.chooserrespect.org](http://www.chooserrespect.org)  
[www.thesafeplace.org](http://www.thesafeplace.org)

## Warning Signs

- Your partner texts you too much, constantly wanting to know where you are and what you are doing
- Your partner asks for inappropriate pictures be sent
- Your partner asks to read your texts, or reads them behind your back

## Tips to Keep You Safe

- ◇ It is okay to turn off your phone
- ◇ Don't answer calls from unknown or blocked numbers... Your abuser can easily call you from another line if they suspect you are avoiding them
- ◇ Don't respond to hostile, harassing, abusive, or inappropriate text messages
- ◇ Save or document troublesome texts in case you later need them as evidence
- ◇ Change your phone number if necessary
- ◇ Talk to your parent/guardian or another caring adult