

TEEN DATING & VIOLENCE

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Teen dating violence is a pattern of controlling behaviors by one teenager to another with whom they are in a dating relationship. This behavior may include physical violence as well as emotional and/or verbal abuse.

Red flags for parents that your teen may be experiencing abuse:

- Unexplained injuries.
- Change in appearance or behavior.
- Apologizing for girlfriend or boyfriends behavior.
- Giving up interest such as friends, school sports or other activities.
- Boyfriend or girlfriend constantly checking up on teen.
- Spending all their time with boyfriend or girlfriend.

What you can do if you believe your teen is being abused:

- Talk to your teen about dating and healthy relationships.
- Avoid being judgmental. Your teen may not be open with information if he/she feels they did something wrong.
- Listen; allow your teen to vent their feelings or concerns.
- Be supportive of your teen reaching out for other assistance. Also encourage contact with NYS Domestic Violence Hotline-1-800-942-6906.
- Tell your teen that you are concerned about their safety. Explain this violence is not normal and everyone deserves to be in a safe, healthy relationship.
- Help develop a safety plan. The most dangerous time for a victim is when they decide to leave. Connect your teen to support groups and professionals that can help keep them safe.
- Remember; ultimately, your teen must be the one to make the choice to leave the relationship. There are many reasons why someone chooses to stay with an abuser. The support they receive can make the critical difference in helping your teen find his/her way to escape abuse.

For more information on teen dating & violence:

<http://www.opdv.ny.gov/whatisdv/tdvinfoguide.html>

http://www.thesafespace.org/pdf/handout_what_parents.pdf

<http://www.thesafespace.org/pdf/handout-help-friend.pdf>

