

# CDC Teen Dating Violence Prevention(TDVP)

## Introduction to the Course

[Narrator]

As an educator, you work with young people every day. You teach them academics, keep them focused and motivated, show them how to stay organized, and even coach them on how they can become healthy, productive adults. But, you also have an opportunity in this role to help make sure something in their lives does not happen – and that's teen dating violence.

[Deborah Gorman Smith, PHD]

Youth are involved in, however they define it, they're involved in romantic relationships – and unfortunately, often within those relationships is a fair amount of aggression and violence.

[NARRATOR]

Yes, violence today is a problem but it is not insurmountable. When educators work together with the school's administration and the larger community, we can prevent teen dating violence and create a better, safer future for our students, in an environment free of violence.

And you are a critical part of that solution.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Teachers may be more likely to recognize when there's a problem going on because they spend a lot more time with youth, and they're seeing youth interacting with dating partners, or peers or friends, in a way that other adults might not be seeing.

[NARRATOR]

Data shows that most teen dating violence occurs in and around school where kids spend most of their day. Your position as a teacher provides unique access to teens and an opportunity to positively influence them around how to develop healthy relationship behaviors.

[NEIL IRVIN, PHD]

Creating an environment where young men and young women can interact with one another in a really, truly equitable way, requires us as adults being accountable for creating healthier environments.

[NARRATOR]

When you have completed this course, you should be able to understand what teen dating violence is; recognize the warning signs; know the importance of risk and protective factors; find effective resources for additional help and information; and, model healthy relationship behaviors in your classroom and throughout your school.

Although this course has been designed for teachers and educators, it will also be useful for any adult who works with and cares for teens – such as a nurse, counselor, or someone working in a community-based organization.

Remember, you are not alone. As an important part of the school community, you can join or lead the discussion around violence prevention among your peers and administration. Your participation together in this effort can help prevent teen dating violence before it starts.

Let's take a look at how...

## Whiteboard Tutorial

[NARRATOR]

Welcome to use your WHITEBOARD.

Here is where you'll be able to view all your course materials; quickly access the tools and information you'll need to keep track of your progress through the course; find relevant resources; review important concepts; revisit completed lessons; and get help and instructions to guide you through.

Access your PLANNER to navigate through the course Modules and Lessons; keep track of your progress; revisit completed lessons. Here, you will also find notes, mementos, and other important information collected on your journey.

Your NOTEBOOK will be used to illustrate key concepts, such as definitions, diagrams, and statistics. The Notebook will also present formative check-in activities.

Go to the RESOURCES section for an easily accessible, interactive collection of resource materials. Here, you'll find information about prevention programs and strategies including classroom based curricula, along with information for you about what to do if you see or hear about dating violence in your school – and information for your students about how to get help if they experience dating violence.

For additional INFORMATION about elements within this course, or HELP navigating through the content, select this icon.

A final note – To receive CE credits for this course, you will need to complete the training in one session – to accomplish this we recommend setting aside a one-hour time slot. You may take the course as many times as you wish in preparation for the final CE evaluation, but the link to the CDC's CE evaluation site will only be accessible at the conclusion of your final lesson. If you need to exit the training at any point, you will be returned to the beginning.

However, the resource section is always available.

Now, to get started, select your Planner.

## Module 1 - What is Teen Dating Violence?

### Lesson 1 - Definition and Examples of Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

Teen dating violence is a preventable problem. But in order to stop it, you need to know what it looks like and how it is defined. We know it's a widespread problem - but do we know what happens to our teens who are involved in dating violence? How does it affect them at school, or in the community? And how can we keep violence from happening in the first place?

These are some of the areas we'll be looking at in - Module 1: What is Teen Dating Violence?

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Teens are thinking about romance and dating – a lot. They spend a lot of time thinking about it; it's very important to them.

[NARRATOR]

You might think it's pretty obvious which of your students is involved in a romantic relationship. But, how do the teens see it? How do today's teens define their dating and romantic relationships?

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

The behaviors haven't really changed a lot – the context of them might have changed. So, the idea of someone arriving in a car to pick you up to go to the movies – might not be the typical experience. But, there is still that romantic connection that youth do experience.

[NARRATOR]

These dating relationships should be a learning process – teens can learn more about themselves and what they're looking for in a romantic partner.

However, each year about one out of every four adolescents reports verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual violence.

However, each year about one out of every four adolescents reports verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual violence.

Teen dating violence seriously affects males and females who are in a close relationship. It's not just a disagreement once in a while or an argument, or a bad mood after a bad day - It is a type of intimate partner violence between two people that evolves into an ongoing pattern of unhealthy relationship behaviors –a pattern of violent behavior that someone uses against their partner to cause pain. Teen dating violence is considered a public health issue because it happens all over our country, affecting many people, but we can also prevent it.

You may have heard several different words used to describe Teen Dating Violence. Here are just a few:

So we're all on the same page, the official term for violence that occurs among teens in a close relationship is, *Teen Dating Violence*.

You probably also know a few terms used to describe people involved in a violent dating relationship, such as:

To be clear, we'll be using the term, Perpetrator – to describe the person who inflicts the violence; and Victim – the person on whom the violence is inflicted.

[NARRATOR]

1 in 5 young people between the ages of 11 and 14 who were surveyed in 2008, say their friends are victims of dating violence.

The survey also showed nearly half of all teens in relationships say they know friends who are verbally abused.

And 41% of the youngest *Tweens*, or those between the ages of 11 and 12, reported their friends as victims of verbal abuse.

Teen Dating Violence includes emotional abuse, physical violence and sexual violence.

We're going to take a closer look at each of these.

[NINO]

Uh, I just started telling her stuff and she did it. And that's what made me feel like, I could tell her to do anything for me.

[Nichole]

Two weeks into the relationship, he was telling me, 'If you don't give me the attention I need, then I'm going to get it from somebody else.' And, at first, I was like, I don't want to lose him – so, ya know, I gave him the attention.

[NARRATOR]

Emotional abuse happens when one partner tries to wear down the other partner's self worth or self-esteem. Maybe you've seen some of these verbally abusive behaviors, but name-calling, teasing, and bullying can also happen within a dating relationship.

Teen dating violence is a pattern of violent behavior that someone uses against their partner to cause pain. "You might have seen this happen: One teen is very critical, or criticizing and making demands on their partner, maybe telling them what they can or can't wear. Or, another might be telling their partner who they can or can't talk to or spend time with.

[ZELL MILLER]

...And it's like, 'Well, he loves me. He keeps telling me he loves me. He slapped me, but he gave me a flower.

[NARRATOR]

Emotionally abusive behaviors can include these examples:

Emotional abuse also carries over into technology and cyberspace. When we make any reference to cyber abuse, cyber bullying or other electronic forms of violence, we're going to use the term, Electronic Aggression.

When teens use Electronic Aggression, whether they're sending texts to each other or posting images on the Internet, it can have a huge impact on a relationship. Whether these messages and postings are positive or negative, they're permanent - forever. If you help them understand images and messages can be uploaded, saved and forwarded countless times by any number of individuals, and seen by potential employers – or their parents - they might get it. There may also be unintended legal consequences teens don't think about.

Emotional abuse can lead to long term effects that include:

[JENNIFER]

It was our first day of high school...I guess he just wanted me to go away...and he just turned around and hit me...and I just remember like a lot of people saw it and were like, looking at me...they couldn't believe I *let* him do that.

[BARRY ROSENBLUTH, LMSW\_ACP]

In a dating relationship, physical abuse is going to look like any slapping, arm twisting; pinching could be bite marks...

[NARRATOR]

Physical violence usually happens after emotional abuse. Teens get into arguments, they insult each other, use name-calling – and that can progress to more intense physical forms of violence.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Adolescence is a time of high emotionality – much higher highs, and much lower lows – and they can be very confused when someone who says that they love them uses violence. And so, a lot of times an adolescent might say, 'Wow, look, we love each other so much – our relationship is so intense – look what happens.'

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Sexual violence does run across a spectrum...unwanted touching is a form of sexual violence. Coercing someone into kissing when they really don't want to is a form of sexual violence. And, these are behaviors that teachers could be witnessing in the hallways of their schools. And, what's important to realize is that it falls in that spectrum of sexual violence. The problem is that images in the mass media sometimes show that as something that's normal and natural. So, one person tries to kiss another person they try to push them away – then, the person tries again and then, yah, the kiss is ok. That's very confusing to everybody.

[NARRATOR]

When we talk about sexual violence, we're talking about anyone forcing a sexual act against someone's will, or ability to consent to the act.

Sexual violence doesn't always involve penetration. We can break it down into four types: A completed sex act; an attempted but non-completed sex act; abusive sexual contact; and non-contact sexual abuse.

If you would like to review each of these types of dating violence, check your notebook.

## Lesson 2 - How Adolescent Development Affects the Teen Dating Relationship

[NARRATOR]

Teens may feel like they 'can't- get- there- quick- enough' when it comes to being an adult. They may try to want to be considered one, even though developmentally they aren't ready yet. By age 15, the developing brain of an adolescent does allow them to use advanced reasoning skills to make decisions. However, the part of the brain that

controls emotion doesn't completely develop until the early 20's. As a result, the decisions they make can be impulsive and highly emotional.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

It's almost as if the world is brand-new to them because they do have these higher level thinking skills developing. So, they're starting to look at the world very differently.

[NARRATOR]

Every year, with each new group of students, you're witnessing these remarkable changes. Their wardrobe styles come and go, their music changes its tune and the latest technologies are constantly being upgraded, but the deep feelings and intense fears, hopes and insecurities faced by teens, remain fairly constant. And that's particularly the case when it comes to dating.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

One of the tasks of adolescents is to learn how to be in a romantic or intimate relationship with someone else. That's something that youth are starting to explore at this age.

[BRAD PERRY, PHD]

It's an intimate partnership. Even if it's a more tenuous one than, say a long term, Adult/Adult relationship.

[DEBORAH GORMAN SMITH, PHD]

These are the first romantic relationships that youth experience, and it sets them up for how they think about involvement in relationships over time.

[NINO]

We met, like, in the seventh grade and...like the first couple of weeks it was...going pretty smooth, but then she started getting jealous of me talking to other females...and I stopped talking to them...she just kept telling me what to do and all this stuff.

[NARRATOR]

Dating violence affects teens and adults. But, because teens are fairly new to dating, they might not be able to recognize that they're in an unhealthy relationship. They often get confused and might mistake their partner's controlling behavior as care or affection.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

A lot of times they think that that's a normal part of a relationship; they think that that's just a sign that the person loved them; they think it's only going to happen that one time; or what have you.

[NARRATOR]

But, even if they do realize they're in an unhealthy relationship, they might not know what to do about it.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Most teens would be relieved to have a trusted adult bring some of these things up with them, because they do want information they're just not sure where to get it.

[NARRATOR]

So, it's up to us to model healthy, respectful behaviors not only in our classrooms but throughout the school. We can set an important example for our teens – showing them that we respect ourselves and others. Respect, that's where we begin prevention.

[REBECCA CAMPBELL, PHD]

We know that it takes more than just a onetime classroom presentation. We have to create community level norms and expectations, so that no matter where we are in our community - whether we're at school, whether at work, we're at church, a mosque or synagogue – we're hearing consistent messages about treating people with dignity and respect; about respecting choices; and having honest conversations about consent.

[BRITTANY]

He's like, 'The man is supposed to have the upper hand.' He said he was raised like that...I'm like, a boy is equal, a relationship is 50/50. Nobody has the upper hand in a relationship and that's how I see it.

[RAE/CASSIE]

Even if you do really like the guy, you have to think, 'OK, is he going to respect me?' And, if not, then there's no use of staying in it.

[NARRATOR]

As they get older, teens are spending more time with their peers and less time with their parents. Teens may be influenced by peers because they admire them and respect their

opinions. They tend to role-play and try out different persona, to see what types of reactions they get.

How teens act around their peers might be completely different than how they behave at home, or in the classroom. However, the parent-child relationship is still an important one. Parents continue to influence teens when it comes to the big issues, including friendships and dating relationships.

If you would like to review more information about how adolescent development affects the teen dating relationship, check your notebook.

### Lesson 3 - Consequences of Teen Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

As teens develop emotionally, they are heavily influenced by their relationship experiences. Healthy relationship behaviors can have a positive effect on a teen's emotional development. Unhealthy, abusive or violent relationships can cause short term and long term negative effects, or consequences to the developing teen.

[DEBORAH GORMAN SMITH, PHD]

The consequences of violence are multiple. Exposure to violence is related to every aspect of mental health problem that we can think about – for both victims and perpetrators.

[NARRATOR]

Perpetrators also experience consequences. Each time that young person is violent or abusive, and there are no negative consequences, that violent behavior is being reinforced. If they don't receive help, they're likely to repeat the negative behavior over and over, and they may develop a lifelong pattern of unhealthy and unhappy relationships.

We need to take the steps that help our students prevent unhealthy relationship behaviors before they develop. If we can do this, we have a good chance for preventing any consequences that might happen as a result of teen dating violence.

When students experience violence in their dating relationships or other forms of violence at school or in their neighborhood, they might cut classes, not go to school as often, or they might dropout altogether. When they do go to school, the violence exposure may affect their grades and their ability to concentrate or pay attention. It also may affect their overall, psychosocial development.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

We might like to think we leave all our baggage at the door and come in to the classroom ready to learn, but that's not true of anybody. If you've got something really serious going on in your personal life that you're worried about, you're going to take it into the classroom with you and it's going to impact your ability to actually engage in the curriculum and be present, and learn.

[NARRATOR]

If you would like to review the consequences of Teen dating violence, check your notebook.

#### Lesson 4 - Challenges in Seeking Help

[NARRATOR]

Maybe the change in your student is very obvious, maybe it's subtle. Regardless, there are many reasons why a student may not come to you with problems he or she is having.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

They're embarrassed to talk with adults about romantic feelings, romantic issues – what's going on in an intimate relationship – and so they often turn to their peers. Part of the problem is that we know that peers aren't always the best source of information.

[NARRATOR]

This can be problematic if peers think that violence is ok in a relationship. If that's the case, teens may not always realize they are in an unhealthy relationship. If they don't think anything is wrong, they won't understand why they may need help.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

If you are spending time with a group of peers that, for example violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflict – if violence occurs in a relationship that peer group would probably support that and that's a problem.

[NARRATOR]

Violence in teen relationships can have an impact on academics—attendance, participation, grades. Talking to your students about absences, falling grades, or lack of participation can provide an opportunity for discussion about other issues.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

A lot of times teens will end up having conversations with a trusted teacher about what's going on in terms of their attendance or their academics – and if the teen trusts that teacher, they may actually disclose that there's something going on in a relationship.

[NARRATOR]

Having these conversations with students may be easier if you understand why they stay in these relationship in the first place.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

It's not the teacher's responsibility, or even role to then have to do something about it, because that's really outside the scope of what teachers are trained to do and what their role is in the school. But, it is important for teachers to realize that they are an important part of that school community, and the larger community, and there are resources that are available to help with these kinds of issues.

[NARRATOR]

If you would like to review the challenges in seeking help, check your notebook.

## Module 2 - Risk and Protective Factors for Teen Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

Ultimately, we want to prevent teen dating violence before it happens. This is known as primary prevention, and there is evidence showing that it actually works.

If we plan to use primary prevention in our classrooms, schools or communities, we'll need to understand what factors in a teen's life may influence their level of risk for, or protection from, dating violence. Understanding these risk and protective factors is an important step in preventing teen dating violence.

However, before we can prevent violence, we'll need to be better prepared to recognize the warning signs telling us a relationship may be unhealthy, or have the potential to become violent. These are the areas we will explore in: Module 2: Risk and Protective Factors for Teen Dating Violence.

### Lesson 1 - Warning Signs for Teen Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

You probably already make casual observations and take mental notes about your students' behavior during each school year. However, many warning signs are not entirely obvious – especially in adolescent relationships. As we discussed, adolescents don't always behave the same in front of adults as they do in front of their peers. They also don't always treat their dating partners the same in private as they do when others are watching. Even if problems do exist, a teen isn't very likely to come right out and discuss them with you.

We need to be able to recognize the warning signs that highlight the potential for both victimization and perpetration.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

We want to recognize what the warning signs are of problems in a relationship – before those problems escalate to the point where one of the partners is using violence to resolve some sort of conflict.

[NARRATOR]

You might even be able to identify which of your students has difficulty with anger control or conflict resolution. Maybe you know which students generally behave aggressively, and which ones are not concerned about the feelings of others. These are some potential warning signs for perpetration.

[RAE/CASSIE]

The biggest warning sign ever is when they start saying that it's more important to hang around with them, than your family.

[NARRATOR]

Problematic relationship behaviors won't go away on their own. As adults, we need to pay attention to the warning signs of unhealthy relationship behaviors, so we can prevent teen dating violence.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Teachers may be more likely to recognize when there's a problem going on because they spend a lot more time with youth and they're seeing youth interact with dating partners or peers or friends, in a way that other adults may not be seeing.

[NARRATOR]

If you do see warning signs, that doesn't necessarily mean a relationship is violent. But it could be a signal that it's unhealthy.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

If they're in a relationship that is having any sort of problems, there's a really good likelihood that they're going to be very distracted, and this is going to have an impact on that student's performance. It's going to show up as absenteeism, It's going to show up as decreased attention in class – it could have an impact on academic functioning, it could create behavioral issues in the school.

[NARRATOR]

To help you and your students recognize the warning signs for unhealthy relationships, you can visit the resources section for a printable, Warning Signs Checklist for Teens.

[NARRATOR]

If you would like to review Warning Signs for Teen Dating Violence, check your notebook.

In lesson 2, we'll be looking at Risk Factors for Teen dating Violence.

## Lesson 2 - Risk Factors for Teen Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

The CDC uses a Social Ecological Model to help us understand the factors that put people at risk for experiencing or perpetrating violence.

No single factor explains why some individuals behave violently toward others or why violence is more prevalent in some communities than in others.

Cultural and environmental factors that influence each of us individually, in our relationships, in our communities, and throughout our society can lead to violence.

Risk factors are associated with a greater likelihood of experiencing teen dating violence. Risk factors are not the cause, but may help us explain why violence happens. For example, a teen may have low self-esteem, but not be in an unhealthy dating relationship. Not everyone who is identified as "at risk" becomes a perpetrator or victim of violence.

The individual level of the model identifies personal characteristics or biological factors. These factors may include things like age and gender. This level also recognizes personal history factors—experiences that people have been through that influence how they think and act.

Here are the individual level factors that may influence a teen's risk for experiencing dating violence:

Interactions between two or more people in a close relationship exist on the relationship level. This level includes factors that increase risk because of relationships with peers, intimate partners, and family members. A person's closest social circle influences their behavior.

Here are the relationship level factors that may influence a teen's risk for experiencing dating violence:

At the Community level, we look at environments in which social relationships take place. How people relate to each other within schools, neighborhoods, organizations, workplace environments, or any other setting that we find groups of people interacting – characterizes how these social relationships affect the likelihood a person may or may not become involved in violence.

Here are the community level factors that may influence a teen's risk for experiencing dating violence:

The final level looks at the broad societal factors that help create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited. These factors include social and cultural norms.

Examples include laws and policies surrounding violence that are created and enforced; media portrayal of violence; climate of tolerance or discrimination regarding various groups of people.

These conditions affect the likelihood a person may or may not become involved in violence.

Here are the societal level factors that may influence a teen's risk for experiencing dating violence:

Our efforts need to include strategies to reduce or eliminate the risks for unhealthy relationship behaviors by reinforcing protective factors. Then, we'll be well on our way to preventing teen dating violence. In lesson 3, we'll look at these protective factors.

If you would like to review Risk Factors for Teen Dating Violence or the Social Ecological Model, check your notebook.

### Lesson 3 - Protective Factors for Teen Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

Primary Prevention, or stopping a problem before it starts, not only requires us to recognize and understand risk factors, but we also need to concentrate on reinforcing protective factors. Protective factors are the positive elements in a person's life that decrease their chances of experiencing violence.

Increasing protective factors by helping youth build positive relationship skills during the pre-teen and teen years will go a long way to helping them achieve more positive relationship experiences throughout their lives.

Protective Factors affect us on all levels of the social ecological model, but at this time, we know more about factors at the individual and relationship levels.

On the INDIVIDUAL level, educationally, economically and socially empowered teens are the most protected. Some individual protective factors include:

On the RELATIONSHIP level, positive parental, or adult caregiver involvement and has been shown to be effective at lowering aggression in youth. Teens also pay attention to how their adult role models manage conflict, make decisions, and behave toward others. This is the way teens learn how they should treat others in relationships and how they may expect to be treated.

By better understanding risk and protective factors, it is easier to understand what contributes to the problem and how to prevent it.

It's important to remember that teens may act differently in the classroom than they do around their parents. As an educator, you may notice behavior or warning signs not seen at home.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Parents probably want to be able to rely on teachers to let them know when something's going on – and a teacher is probably going to be more likely to see something in the context of a school environment than a parent would see – because teachers are seeing youth interact with dating partners and peers and friends...in a way that parents aren't.

[NARRATOR]

On the COMMUNITY and SOCIETAL levels, research is ongoing to identify additional protective factors for teen dating violence.

So, we can see that by positively encouraging and supporting teens and their interactions with parents and caregivers, our support may translate to a positive school and community environment. By reinforcing these protective factors, we hope to eliminate the risks for teen dating violence.

By reinforcing these protective factors, we hope to eliminate the risks for teen dating violence. In Module 3, we will discuss how to reinforce protective factors by modeling healthy relationship behaviors for teens. Then, stop by the Resource Center to find strategies and programs to help you prevent teen dating violence.

If you would like to review Protective Factors for Teen Dating Violence, check your notebook.

## Module 3 - Making Healthy Relationship Choices

[NARRATOR]

So far, we've examined teen dating violence from several different angles –But, we haven't really looked at many specific alternatives to unhealthy behaviors – until now.

Remember, preventing violence before it happens means that we need to promote the protective factors for healthy relationships, and reduce the risk factors for unhealthy relationships.

But, what exactly does that mean? What does a healthy behavior look like – and how can we promote healthy behaviors in our school?

We're going to find out here. We'll also make sure we understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. But first, we need to be certain we understand why teens don't talk to adults about dating violence.

These are the areas we will explore in: Module 3: Making Healthy Relationship Choices.

### Lesson 1 - Teens are not Talking with Adults about Dating Violence

[NARRATOR]

By the time most teens reach 15, they have already had some experience with dating. Regardless of how these early romantic relationships play out, they will affect not only the teen's feelings of self and intimacy – but also the decisions they make about all their relationships. This includes dating partners, family, friends, and co-workers.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

They don't necessarily want the relationship to end, they want the bad stuff in the relationship to end – because they really care about that person – and adults don't always see that. So, teens fear that the reaction is going to be – 'Well, you're just going to have to break up with that person!' And, that's not what the teen wants.

[NARRATOR]

So, families and parents are sometimes unaware their teen is in a romantic relationship. If their teen is having problems in a relationship, their families may not know about it until it's too late.

[NARRATOR]

Many adolescents may try to hide many of their behaviors from parents or other adults for several reasons. This may include not wanting to hear any judgment or comments about their behavior choices, maintaining privacy, or wanting to appear self-sufficient and knowledgeable – even if they aren't. They also may not realize they need help, or they may not recognize the seriousness of their relationship problems.

[BARRY ROSENBLUTH, PHD]

Parents may be the last to know, that's why it's important that other adults in children's lives are informed about dating violence, know how to talk about relationships and give youth an opportunity to talk about what's going on in their relationships.

[NARRATOR]

Even if we teach teens about healthy behaviors, that doesn't guarantee they will act accordingly in every situation. Sometimes, teens who behave violently toward their dating partners will develop a habit of using excuses to justify their unhealthy behaviors.

Teens new to dating relationships may not understand or recognize these for what they are – excuses – and they may dismiss or ignore the unhealthy behavior.

And, keep in mind, teen dating violence equally affects both males and females.

[DEBORAH GORMAN SMITH, PHD]

It's simply not true that girls are only victims and boys are only perpetrators. Girls are actually, particularly in these early years, participating in and perpetrating in as much violence as the young men are.

[NARRATOR]

Remember, if unhealthy relationship behaviors are left unchecked, they may continue on into adult relationships. This can set teens up for future victimization or perpetration – and can affect the community as a whole.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

And it really is a community responsibility to make sure we help when there's a problem going on – but, also that we prevent those problems from occurring in the first place.

[NARRATOR]

Preventing violence can begin simply – as a conversation. So, if you notice any of your students having a problem, consider talking with them about it.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

It is appropriate for a teacher to have a conversation with that particular student about what's going on. What's important to realize though, is that it's not the teacher's responsibility to then try to fix anything. What the teacher can do is pull in other resources to be able to help that student – whether that be someone inside the school or outside the school. So, perhaps the school counselor; perhaps the parents; and sometimes, if the problem is serious enough, you may actually need to involve law enforcement.

[NARRATOR]

Schools are central to the lives of teens, and because educators spend so much time with students on a daily basis, there is continuous opportunity to build trust and create an environment that allows and encourages open classroom discussions. These discussions can motivate teens toward developing healthy relationship skills for interactions with friends, dating partners – and even with adults.

If you would like to review how Teens are Not Talking to Adults about Dating Violence, check your notebook.

In our next lesson, we're going to look at the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviors – so we can all tell the difference.

## Lesson 2 - Healthy and Unhealthy Relationship Behaviors

[NARRATOR]

We have been discussing how important it is that we establish open communication with our students so they learn they can trust us to help them find the information they need. We also talked about people who display unhealthy behaviors are more likely to have unhealthy relationships, and likewise, those who display healthy behaviors are likely to have healthy relationships in the future. Now it's time to take a look at both and compare the two.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Being in a healthy relationship is really good for people in general, and for adolescents, if they're in a healthy dating relationship – that's respectful, allows for mutual interest – that can actually help youth develop a better sense of confidence that can help them in terms of their own identity development, help them become a more respectful partner, and it's good for both partners.

[DEBORAH GORMAN SMITH, PHD]

We need to be helping youth develop healthy relationships more generally. So, the way that we think about dating violence prevention is in the context of developing healthy relationships both within those kinds of dating romantic relationships – but, with same sex peers, opposite sex peers, and other relationships that youth may be involved in.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

So, relationships that involve open communication; trusting your partner; allowing the partner to have some autonomy and make decisions on their own; and share decision making – so one person doesn't have more power over the other, in terms of making even basic decisions about what you're going to do together; where you're going to go – things like that.

[NARRATOR]

Healthy relationships involve a lot of give and take, and neither partner should be completely dependent on the other to meet all of his or her needs. Rather, there should be inter-dependence.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Part of what youth need to figure out is – what is that inter-dependence? How can they rely on that relationship for some things, but not for everything? And that's why a healthy relationship is so key.

[NARRATOR]

Healthy relationships are ones with open and honest communication, where both partners share power and control over decisions.

Unhealthy relationships are ones that look and sound imbalanced; where one partner is trying to control the other. One or both partners may use threats, intimidation, abusive or violent language, or name calling. There may be insults, or some belittling of one partner in front of others.

There could also be an attempt at isolation where one partner tries to keep the other from interacting with other people – including family or friends.

No relationship is completely conflict free – including healthy ones. But, how the partners resolve those conflicts is the key to staying healthy.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

People get angry with one another – it's OK to be angry. What's not OK is to hit someone or to throw something. So, it's what you do with it that's important.

[BARRY ROSENBLUTH, PHD]

How...I...define a healthy relationship, one in which both partners are equal. One in which both partners are free to express what they need, what they want, make their own choices and free to end the relationship if they choose.

[NARRATOR]

Young people need to learn healthy relationship behaviors now, to help prevent adult intimate partner violence later in life. Individuals and their partners have a responsibility to learn these behaviors, but as we discovered in the social ecological model, it is also the responsibility of the whole community and society in which we live.

Many young people don't have healthy relationship role models in their homes or communities; instead, they have grown up in environments where intimate partner violence takes place between their parents. Many teens are heavily influenced by popular culture and peers, and as we have already learned, if these examples are not healthy, the effects can be troublesome.

We can help our students develop healthy relationship behaviors and prevent future intimate partner violence by promoting these elements of healthy relationships:

It's important that we communicate to our students that healthy relationships are built on a foundation of respect. Knowing what characterizes a respectful relationship can go a long way in setting up healthy expectations.

Remembering that even healthy relationships will have conflict, there are certain behaviors that separate the healthy from the unhealthy. These are examples of what healthy relationship behaviors look like.

[BRITTNEY]

It hurt a lot when he wasn't respecting me. I wanna be respected just like I respect you...That's all I ask for, ya know.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Treating yourself with respect is – making good decisions for yourself in terms of who you're going to spend time with, what you are going to focus on – taking care of yourself, taking care of your health – those kinds of things.

[NARRATOR]

Treating other people the way we would like to be treated – also known as mutual respect - takes all of us modeling that behavior to each other.

To review Healthy and Unhealthy Relationship Behaviors, check your notebook. In our next lesson, we'll learn about an educator's role in teaching healthy behaviors.

### Lesson 3 - Understanding an Educator's Role in Teaching Healthy Behaviors

[NARRATOR]

We know from learning about primary prevention, that we really need to teach these healthy behaviors before teens start dating. This should happen before they have a chance to establish any unhealthy behaviors.

[DEBORAH GORMAN SMITH, PHD]

One of the strategies that we know does not work, is to just sit down and tell kids what they shouldn't do.

[NARRATOR]

So, what does work? Well, research tells us teens are still paying close attention to our behavior, even if we don't think they are.

[RITA NOONAN, PHD]

...teens are very perceptive and they're going to pick up on you know, what are the clues to appropriate behavior by watching adults around them. So, there's a lot of evidence to suggest that adults modeling good behavior is one powerful form of prevention.

[NARRATOR]

This is important to keep in mind during our interactions with teens and other adults. If we model healthy behaviors, we can set a tone for relationships in our classrooms and schools. In turn, that tone may make its way into our communities.

As we've said, it's not the role of a teacher to solve all the relationship problems a student may bring to us, but it is important for students to feel they can come to us in confidence for helpful information. So, how do we let students know we are there for them?

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Creating an open environment where people feel that they can express an opinion without being judged – where they can ask questions without being ridiculed or judged – those can happen in the classroom. Those can also happen with relationships with youth and their parents.

[NARRATOR]

When a student does come to you, give them your undivided attention. If now is not a good time, make sure the teen can wait for a little while, and then find a time that works for both of you.

Don't forget to follow up on a regular basis after you direct your student toward the right resource. This is a great way to let them know you really are concerned.

To help that student, you'll need to really understand what he or she is asking of you. If you're unclear about what they need, ask them. This will assure the student you care and take their concern seriously.

Occasionally, teens may seek out an educator for one-to-one discussion about difficult issues, but the classroom provides an opportunity to reach a larger group of students. Teachers can encourage respectful behavior in their classrooms and promote a positive school environment.

Give your students clear examples of what is appropriate behavior in the classroom. Talk to them about respect and the standards of conduct you expect.

Talk with students about using a respectful tone and respectful language when they talk in class. This will help create an environment where all students feel it is safe to participate in discussions and activities. If emotions are running high, let students know they can take a "time out" from the discussion until they feel they are more in control.

Help your students understand compromising and taking turns allows people to feel listened to, understood and respected. Let them know that negative behavior, like insulting and name-calling, has no place in respectful negotiation or in your classroom.

Make sure your students know it is OK to ask for help with problems – they don't have to handle problems on their own. Whether they rely on peers, trusted adults, teachers, or parents– they should ask someone for help.

You may have opportunities outside a traditional health class where you can bring up the subject of healthy or unhealthy relationship behaviors. It could be a discussion about the latest movie, TV show, or even your subject matter.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

So, for example if you're teaching literature, have some explicit conversation about the healthy relationship or unhealthy relationship that's occurring between two characters – and you've just set the groundwork to do some of this.

There are also different tools and curricula out there that are available for you that have been developed and have evidence behind them that have been shown to prevent teen dating violence.

[NARRATOR]

Teens watch how adults handle and react to different situations. Modeling healthy behavior in the school and classroom starts with each one of us. If we do not practice what we preach, our students may tune us out when we talk about the importance of healthy relationships.

[DIANE HALL, PHD]

Teachers are an important part of the school as a community – and of the community as a whole. And there are different things you can do as part of that community to help promote healthy relationships and prevent violent ones from occurring.

So, some of the things teachers might want to do to start out is, to look at what kinds of school policies they have around the issues of dating violence. Some different examples include what to do...for example...if violence has already occurred – if a student already has a protection order against another student – how does the school respond to that?

How does the school respond to any types of violence that occurs in hallways or in classrooms, that kind of thing? So, take a look to see what sort of policies there are that are available in your school.

And, you can also get involved with different agencies that are outside your school that do this kind of work.

[NARRATOR]

By now, you know it takes a whole community to prevent the unhealthy behaviors that lead to violence. Each of us, as members of the community, has a role in the lives of these students. Whether we're communicating with teens, our peers, our administration, or with parents, we need to model these healthy and positive relationship behaviors to set an example for our teens to follow. As we model these healthy behaviors in our classrooms, schools and in the community, we set the tone for all relationships in our students' lives.

Together, we can prevent teen dating violence.

If you need to review any of the Teen Dating Violence Prevention concepts we've discussed in this or a previous lesson, check your notebook.

Also, if you would like to learn more about teen dating violence prevention tools and curricula for the classroom, school or community – Check out the resources center available in this training.

## Resource Center - Teen Dating Violence Prevention Resources

[NARRATOR]

As a critical part of the school community where teens spend so much of their time, you really can make a difference. Behaviors, policies, and structures — including those found in schools and other educational settings — create environments that can support respectful, nonviolent relationships.

Here are suggestions to help you implement dating violence prevention measures in your school.

First, Explore the Resource Center provided in this course. Your teaching style, school's geographic location, student body, school's policies, and other factors all contribute to your specific teaching situation. Review the materials on teen dating violence prevention to determine what materials are right for you and your school.

Be conscientious about modeling healthy relationship behaviors and respectful communication to your students, as we have described in Module #3 of this course. If your students see healthy behaviors in the classroom, they may be more likely to engage in those healthy behaviors in other relationships as well. By creating an open and safe place to talk, teens also may feel more comfortable to come to you when they need help.

Think of ways to implement classroom activities with your students that reinforce healthy relationship behaviors and actively educate them about teen dating violence. You can find examples in the Resource Center.

Find time to talk to your administrator.

Discuss your school's policies and code of conduct.

If your school has guidelines on violence, find out if there are any policies specific to teen dating violence.

If school policies exist, consider ways to improve or better implement them if needed.

If school policies do not exist, start a conversation with your school's administration on any gaps in policy. Use information from our resource center to guide your discussion.

Think about ways to educate teachers in your school about teen dating violence — share this course with fellow teachers, administrators, school counselors, and other colleagues who work with teens.

Consider forming a committee focused on making the school safe and creating a healthy community. Include administrators, educators, parents, and students.

Talk to other educators in your school and other schools to find out what they are doing to prevent dating violence. Join or lead the conversation with these educators to form a community of teachers, adults, or other community members who are active in dating violence prevention.

If dating violence is happening or has already happened in your school, there are definite steps to take – Explore the Resource Center to locate specific information about what to do if you are aware of dating violence.

Of course, the best course of action is to be prepared before dating violence happens. To do this, you should become familiar with your school policy and any available resources, including a school nurse, counselor, psychologist, or any other school personnel who are trained to intervene in this type of situation.

In some communities, local area resources may be willing to present dating violence seminars or workshops for school staff.

Welcome to the Resource Center!

This Resource Center is organized in a way that allows you to quickly access the information you need, when you need it. Within each resource, you will find a comprehensive array of materials and information that will help you start the discussion about teen dating violence prevention with your students, fellow educators, and administrators. However, take the time to explore this room fully and review its contents carefully.

The room is divided into eight sections – general information, tools to help schools and school districts, evidence-based curricula to prevent teen dating violence, evidence-based curricula to prevent violent or aggressive behavior, clearinghouses, strategies and tools in prevention, hotlines, and tools to help schools after violence happens.

Each section can be accessed by rolling over the highlighted elements, or by selecting the specific section from the list.

You may save the information by downloading a printable pdf.

This area includes information you can use to help prevent several types of violence in your community.

Information found in this section can help guide violence prevention efforts in your school and district.

These evidence-based programs have been evaluated and shown to help prevent Teen Dating Violence when implemented correctly.

These programs have not been evaluated for their impact on teen dating violence, but they prevent other types of aggression that share some similar risk factors.

While these registries include information about many types of effective programs, they also include information on violence prevention.

In this section, you'll find a variety of materials that are designed to prevent several types of partner violence, and address violence-related issues and behaviors.

These toll free telephone numbers and/or Web sites offer support for teens or adults who are involved in or have concerns about violence. Because there is no face-to-face interaction, these resources offer confidential, accessible help to the caller. Counselors can also direct the caller to further resources.

If violence has already happened in your school, these resources may assist you in finding information and services in your area to meet your needs.