

Crime Prevention Tip: Teen Dating Violence

What is it? Teen dating violence is an act, or acts, that are abusive to one or both of the parties involved in a teen relationship. There are several forms of abuse that can occur: physical, emotional, sexual, behavioral, and economical.

Why does it matter? Teen dating violence is increasingly becoming a problem. It happens every day, and often goes unreported. It is something that needs to be stopped. Often times there are huge psychological costs associated with teen dating violence for the involved victims.

Who does it affect? The teens involved in the dating relationship are obviously directly affected by the teen violence. Indirectly, parents, counselors, friends, family, and even potential future children all feel the effects of such violence.

How can you recognize it? There are several indicators that a teen relationship may be prone to violence. First and foremost, irrational outbursts (often interpreted as expressions of compassion) should be warning signs for potential violence in a teen relationship. If a person, or both persons, involved in a teen relationship feel perpetually threatened, humiliated, criticized, powerless, dominated, manipulated, victimized, unworthy, and/or abused, the relationship may tend to be more unstable and more susceptible to violence. Sometimes, physical marks may be visible indicators of dating violence. Unfortunately, it can be very difficult for a victim to initiate getting help with teen dating violence. As such, it is sometimes difficult to detect teen dating violence. Nonetheless, identifying a potentially violent teen relationship in the early stages can help avoid any harm to you or the people you care about.

Weigh Options: When deciding what action to take to deal with teen dating violence, one should consider several factors. Do you feel endangered? Abused? Victimized by a teenage significant other? And if so, to what extent? The answers to these questions may expose a threat for potential violence. Depending of the severity of that threat, you may need to seek professional help to resolve any relationship issues. Not all dating issues need professional help; in fact, many relationship issues can be peacefully resolved between the two teenage parties. Even teachers, coaches, friends, counselors, and parents can be involved in solutions to stop teen dating violence. In serious situations however, teenagers should never attempt to stop teen dating violence by themselves because they can put themselves and others in significant danger. Always seek help from an adult.

Get Help: Talk to you partner, favorite teacher, guidance counselor, and/or parents to see if any solutions can be reached. Lake Resource and Crisis Center Crisis Line – 218-847-8572