



FEBRUARY IS...

**TEEN DATING
VIOLENCE
AWARENESS
MONTH**

Marina Montemayor
Violence Prevention Educator
mmontemayor@namonline.org

Northwest Assistance Ministries
Family Violence Center



The causes of being damaged by the person you love
A. Gonzales, 2020 Creative Arts Challenge Participant



History of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Timeline



2010: Congress Declares February as TDVAM

2020: 10 Year Anniversary

2021: We are here! Time for action!

2030: What do we want the future to hold?



Dear Community Partner,

We are pleased to present you with Northwest Assistance Ministries (NAM), Family Violence Center's 2021 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM) Toolkit. In it you will find fundamental information about teen dating violence (TDV), as well as important information about how you can get involved throughout the month. A big way to get involved is to join us in celebrating Respect Week. Respect Week is the second week of February and is dedicated to taking action. To honor this week, we have created short videos for each day of the week covering various topics to get teens inspired by the movement. The videos are short and to the point, but can have lasting impacts. Our hope is that you will share these videos with your students at the start of each day during Respect Week:

1. **Monday, February 8:** *I Need Space: Unhealthy Relationships and Boundaries*
https://youtu.be/cX_EGf6Ndkw
2. **Tuesday, February 9:** *Break the Silence, Stop the Violence: Wear Orange Day.* On this day we will ask the community to join us in wearing orange and spread awareness.
<https://youtu.be/U9QQUyfmz7A>
3. **Wednesday, February 10:** *The G.O.A.T Kind of Love: Healthy Relationships*
<https://youtu.be/b5KLoxwVTps>
4. **Thursday, February 11:** *Don't Hate, Communicate: Expressing Yourself*
<https://youtu.be/tV3J2RNqg20>
5. **Friday, February 12:** *Happiness Looks Good on You: Self-Care and Safety Planning*
<https://youtu.be/PkXJHJhRK58>

The unfortunate reality is that we have to break the silence, talk about teen dating violence, and be aware of the gravity of the issue. The CDC reports that one in three adolescents will experience some form of abuse in an intimate relationship before they graduate from high school. Of those who do experience abusive relationships, only 33% tell someone. Thus, the majority of those who experience teen dating violence suffer in silence. One way to lower these statistics is to strengthen teen-adult relationships. Having a trusted adult in one's life is an important protective factor to potential or future abuse, which is why we call upon you this month to show your support for TDVAM 2021!

Despite the limitations of COVID-19, we hope to unite our community in creating spaces for teens to recognize and develop healthy relationships among themselves and those around them. Confronting this issue feels more important than ever. We know that teens these days are surrounded by conflicting and often toxic messages about relationships from a variety of sources. Harmful conceptions of relationships they take in, coupled with inexperience and a desire for self-autonomy results in teens navigating new relationships on their own or alongside their friends who are facing the same battles. As educators, parents, and caregivers, you are in the ideal position to prioritize the confrontation of this issue and consequently guide and educate young people so they can experience a future free of violence.

We want to thank you for your continuous support. We really cannot bring about change without you! If you would like more information about this TDVAM Toolkit, teen dating violence, or our Prevention Education programs please contact our Violence Prevention Educator, Marina Montemayor at mmontemayor@namonline.org or our Community Outreach Specialist, Cynthia Butler at cbutler@namonline.org.

Tenga en cuenta que algunas secciones se han traducido al español, lo que esperamos es que pueda maximizar nuestro alcance e impacto. Encontrará estas secciones al final de este kit

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**Family Violence Center 24 hour hotline number
281-885-HOPE (4673)**



SECTION 1: Important TDVAM Dates to Know

Mark Your Calendars

Each year, the entire month of February is dedicated to raising awareness about Teen Dating Violence (TDV). This month, which is honored nation-wide, is essentially a call to action to shatter the silence and engage in difficult conversations. While this is a month-long awareness campaign, the second week of the month is TDVAM's Respect Week. The big day is, Tuesday, February 9, which is known as **"Go Orange Day"** as orange is the awareness color for TDV! We extend an invitation to you to join us in wearing orange. Adorning yourself in orange on this day is a great and simple way for you to show support for TDV and spread awareness. You are only an outfit away from starting a necessary conversation about TDV. Make sure and show us how you choose to wear orange by tagging us on social media with the hashtags, **#YouAreNotAloneDV**, **#tdvam**, **#NAMGoesOrange**, **#teendatingviolence**.

We have created short videos for each day of the week geared towards students. We encourage you to begin your mornings with some awareness by hosting a viewing of these videos for your students. They are short and to the point, but can have a lasting impact, as we never know who needs to hear these messages. You can access the videos at www.namonline.org/family-center or on [Northwest Assistance Ministries' YouTube Channel](#).

- Monday, February 8:** *I Need Space: Unhealthy Relationships and Boundaries*
https://youtu.be/cX_EGf6Ndkw
- Tuesday, February 9:** *Break the Silence, Stop the Violence: Wear Orange Day.* On this day we will ask the community to join us in wearing orange and spread awareness.
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FEBRUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 TDVAM Kick-off!	2	3	4	5	6
7 RESPECT WEEK	8 RESPECT WEEK <i>I Need Space: Unhealthy Relationships and Boundaries</i>	9 RESPECT WEEK <i>Break the Silence, Stop the Violence: Wear Orange Day</i>	10 RESPECT WEEK <i>The G.O.A.T Kind of Love: Healthy Relationships</i>	11 RESPECT WEEK <i>Don't Hate, Communicate: Expressing Yourself</i>	12 RESPECT WEEK <i>Happiness Looks Good on You: Self-Care and Safety Planning</i>	13 RESPECT WEEK
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Last chance to honor this month.						

SECTION 2: Social Media Tool Kit

Social Media Materials

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is dedicated to spreading awareness. A great place to start is on social media, especially because it is free, easy, and is far-reaching. Visit our Facebook page for posts you can use on your own platforms. Or use the suggestions below to draw inspiration from to create your own! Either way, we want to see how you are spreading awareness this TDVAM21. Show us your support by using the hashtags **#NAMGoesOrange**, **#YouAreNotAloneDV**, **#tdvam**, **#teendatingviolence**.

Samples to spark your inspiration:

1. February is...
 - Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
 - #TDVAM2021
2. What is TDVAM?
 - TDVAM is an annual, month-long campaign to bring awareness to the issue of teen dating violence
 - We invite you to join us and take a stand for healthy relationships
3. Today is...
 - Tag us on social media (see below) and tell us why you are participating in **#NAMGoesOrange**
 - #NAMGoesOrange to show solidarity with young people and to promote healthy relationships

- [Facebook](#) (@NAMNeighbors)
- [Twitter](#) (@NAMNeighbors)
- [Instagram](#) (@NAMHelps)
- [LinkedIn](#) (Northwest Assistance Ministries)




50 % of Texas teens*
have personally
experienced
dating
violence &
abuse.

Teen Dating
Violence
Awareness
Month
#TDVAM

NAM's Family Violence Center
provides Student Outreach & Education
to help end this abuse.

*Source: Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Center for Social Work Research
School of Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin.

 **#YouAreNotAloneDV**
#teendatingviolenceawarenessmonth
FVC 24/7 CRISIS HOTLINE: (888) 750-HOPE (4673)

Teen Dating Violence Is...

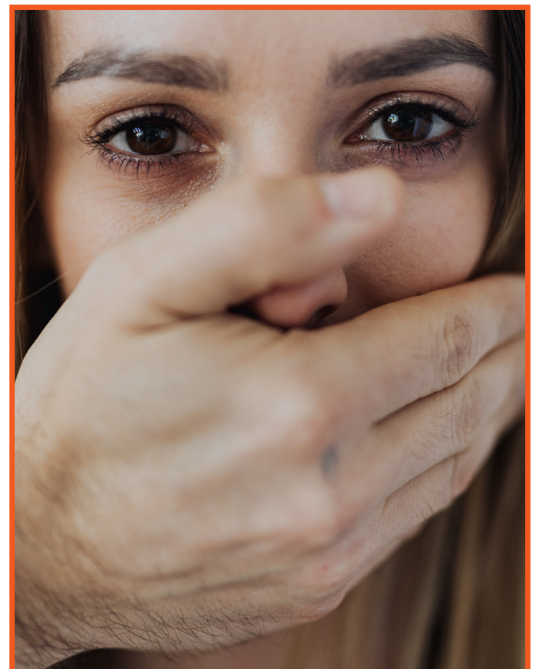
1. COMPLEX:

- Teen Dating Violence, also referred to as TDV, is defined as a pattern of violent behavior that a person uses against their partner to gain **power and control** in the relationship.
- This definition is big and broad and it is intended so because dating abuse is a complicated matter; it can show up in a multitude of ways. While abuse can cause injury or even death, but it is not always physical. It can also be emotional/verbal, sexual, digital, financial, or can come in the form of stalking. With a lack of dating experience and the absence of conversations about this issue, teens are more vulnerable to dating violence than adults as they are less likely to recognize unhealthy behaviors.



2. PREVALANT:

- According to Love is Respect, the leading national organization working to end TDV, **1 in 3** adolescents in the United States will be a victim of physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner before they graduate from high school. This equates to roughly **1.5 million** American teens who are affected each year by some form of dating abuse. These statistics are much higher than other types of violence among adolescents, making it increasingly apparent that this is a public health crisis.



3. DEVASTATING:

- As young people develop, they are naturally shaped by their relationships, both platonic and intimate. Just as healthy relationships positively affect their development, unhealthy or violent relationships can result in both short-term and long-term negative consequences. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications as victims are at a higher risk for:
 - Poorer school performance
 - Feelings of depression and anxiety, or suicide ideation
 - Binge drinking, smoking, or experimentation with drugs
 - Becoming pregnant or contracting an STD
 - Engaging in unhealthy diet behaviors and developing a negative body image
 - Developing a pattern of entering and staying in violent relationships into adulthood



Teen Dating Violence Is...

4. PREVENTABLE:

- The prevalence of adverse outcomes associated with teen dating violence emphasizes the need to sustainably address this issue. The hopeful news is that TDV is preventable! The CDC reports that encouraging the development of healthy, nonviolent relationships can help diminish the occurrence of TDV and thus avert its damaging effects. During impressionable teen years, adolescents must begin learning the necessary skills needed to foster healthy relationships. Research shows that middle school and high school students who participate in prevention programs show increased knowledge of this issue as well as healthier attitudes about intimate relationships, which is why Violence Prevention Education must be a priority.
- In addition to prioritizing Violence Prevention Education, an important protective factor is strong teen-adult relationships. Only 33% of young adults affected by dating violence tell someone. Equally as alarming, 81% of caregivers surveyed by the CDC believe that teen dating violence is not an issue or admit that they do not know if it is an issue.
- This is why we need you and your dedicated allyship! Please join us this Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in shattering the silence, raising awareness about this issue, and promoting safe and healthy relationships!



SECTION 4: Schools and Educators

The Center for Disease Control recognizes that Teen Dating Violence is a public health priority. It is widespread, prevalent, and negatively affects adolescents' physical, mental, and social health. Schools are a site of crucial socialization and given the sheer amount of time that students spend in the classroom, schools have a unique and obligatory opportunity to address TDV. We know that addressing dating violence carries numerous benefits such as improved academic performance, reduced truancy, and a more nurturing environment for all students to learn and grow as individuals and members of society. Schools can proactively address TDV by focusing on Violence Prevention Education, guaranteeing that your teachers and staff individuals know about the essentials TDV, and building up compelling arrangements and strategies to address dating brutality, which again instructors and staff individuals know about. Our hope with this toolkit is that it can either function as a starting place to familiarize yourself with the basics of TDV and how to respond to it, or spark further interest in how your school can work to adequately address this issue and prevent it in the future.

Warning Signs of Teen Dating Abuse Identifiable in the Classroom

The warning signs of dating violence are not always noticeable, because abuse can manifest differently in each relationship. However, there are some signs to watch out for that could signal to you that a student is experiencing TDV. If you know what to look for you might be able to identify an unhealthy relationship before it becomes violent or life-threatening.

- Decreased attendance or frequently late to class, particularly if this is a new problem
- Unexplained changes such as grades dropping or lower quality of schoolwork
- Difficulty paying attention during class
- Changes in physical appearance
 - A noticeable change in weight
 - Wearing baggier clothes
 - Either beginning to wear more makeup or none at all
 - In violent cases, a student may have frequent bruising
- The student becomes passive or withdrawn
 - A loss of friendships
 - Or general isolation
- The student may have unexplained or sudden illnesses, especially if consistent
- Your student may always be noticeably concerned about their partner
 - Again, you may notice that they have little contact with anyone besides their partner
- Hostility towards classmates
 - New disciplinary problems at schools, such as bullying



Victim-centered Words of Affirmation

Hearing about teen dating violence is not easy, especially if you have a personal relationship with the young person. When a student discloses abuse, it is a rich opportunity to offer support and comfort, but we want to remind you that your reaction could also deter the teen from reaching out for help in the future. So, we encourage you to be as supportive and non-judgmental as that moment allows you to be. If a student is talking to you about unhealthy behaviors in their relationship, it is probably because they trust you. You can further foster that relationship by first offering them words that acknowledge their vulnerability and bravery, such as:

- This is not your fault
- You did not do anything to deserve this kind of abuse
- You deserve to be treated with respect in your relationship
- No one deserves to experience any form of abuse
- I admire your courage for coming forward and confiding in me
- I am glad that you told me about this
- Your safety is my priority
- I am here to support you the best that I can
- There are always options available. Let's figure out what works for you and make sure you get the help you need.

The Do's and Don'ts of Responding to Teen Dating Violence

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen: give the student your full attention and the space to thoroughly express themselves• Keep your mandatory reporting status in mind<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Tell your student what you are required to do under the law or school policy> Be honest about your ability to keep information confidential or not• Connect the student with their counselor• Be knowledgeable about the resources available• Provide information about resources to the student• Encourage your students to seek help, while also allowing the student to make their own decisions• Familiarize yourself with your school's dating violence policy. If your school does not have one, encourage administration to develop one• Check in with the student throughout the school year and beyond, letting them continuously know that you care for their well-being and safety• Prioritize Violence Prevention Education within your classroom<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Contact our Violence Prevention Educator for more information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be judgmental about your student's relationship or choices• Make promises you cannot keep• Take control of the situation (unless an emergency requires you to)• Ignore or minimize the warning signs. If you see something, say something• Diminish the abuse or the importance of the relationship• Make assumptions about how your student wants to manage an abusive relationship or the situation• Confront the abuser, even if you have a relationship with that student – this could put the victim at risk• Assume that the student is in a heterosexual relationship• Show shock or disapproval if your student tells you about their sexual activities• Share a student's private information with unnecessary people or talk about students in public areas of the school

Take ACTION!

Sample school announcement

Good Morning students!! Today is February 1, 2021, which marks the first day of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Every February, communities across the country come together for a national effort to raise awareness about the issue of teen dating violence. This annual, month-long campaign is dedicated to breaking the silence and starting conversations around teen dating violence to stop the abuse before it starts. We want you to know that your well-being and safety is our number one priority so we will be participating in Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month 2021. We encourage you to show your support by wearing orange on Tuesday, February 9th! Together, we can take a stand and put an end to futures with violence.

Encourage your staff and students to Go Orange on Tuesday, February 9th



Do you have an effective Teen Dating Violence School Policy?

If yes, that is great! Make sure your teachers and staff members are familiar with it.

If no, we encourage you to take a look at this comprehensive guide that BREAK THE CYCLE has previously published at

<https://www.breakthecycle.org/sites/default/files/pdf/dc-model-school-policy.pdf>

Last but certainly not least, contact our Violence Prevention Educator, Marina Montemayor, at mmontemayor@namonline.org to book a classroom presentation

SECTION 5: Information for Parents and Caregivers

It cannot be stressed enough that violence within teen relationships is shockingly high. It is likely that your child has already begun dating, perhaps more seriously than you know about. Relationships between teenagers are often intense and all-consuming; they can easily take over and become their whole world. So, the truth is, violence within your child's dating life could very much be a reality. Unfortunately, this issue is not taken seriously as many caregivers can find it inconceivable to think of their children as having intimate relationships, let alone a violent one. However, given the facts, research, and what we know from working in the field, our young people deserve for us to take it seriously, especially because adolescents who perpetrate or experience abuse in their early dating relationships are more at risk to form patterns of abuse that can carry on into their adult lives.



We know that it may be uncomfortable for you to acknowledge that your child is involved in an intimate relationship. Furthermore, we understand that knowing, or even suspecting, that your child is, or could be involved in an abusive situation is frightening and the last thing you want to think about. Despite the discomfort of this issue, we must accept the realities of intimate teen relationships if we want to make a real impact. As a caregiver, you play a crucial role in helping them develop healthy relationships and empowering them to know when it is time to say goodbye to a relationship. The encouraging news is, teen dating violence can be prevented; caregivers must be a part of the efforts. There is a lot that you can do to step in and help. It just requires some learning and a commitment to reach out, listen, and talk with your children.

Some signs to look out for in your child:

Teen Dating Violence is a silent, but pervasive epidemic. It often goes unnoticed because victims experiencing abuse do not confide in adults. The CDC reports that only 67% of adolescents who experience some form of dating abuse never tell anyone. Thus, in those times when a young person is suffering in silence, it is important for us to be able to recognize the warning signs so we can step in and help before it becomes violent.

- They lose interest in activities that they used to enjoy
- Changes in personality, such as becoming anxious or depressed
- Dramatic changes in clothes or make-up
- Suddenly acting out or being secretive
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- They stop seeing their friends or family and mostly just hang out with their partner
- They apologize for their partner's behavior and constantly make excuses for them
- You see extreme jealousy in the relationship
- Using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs
- Your child has unexplained injuries and any explanation they offer does not make sense



Tips and Tricks

A few tips and tricks to keep in mind when speaking with your child about healthy and unhealthy relationships.

- **Find the right time and space**

- It is important to create a safe space for a productive conversation to take place with your child. First and foremost, avoid letting your child know that you want to talk with them in front of other people. Secondly, the conversation should take place in a private and comfortable place.



- **Listen**

- Let your child lead the conversation. Give them the space and time to talk and tell their story.

- **Encourage open, honest, shame-free reflections**

- Avoid dismissing their thoughts as wrong, but rather encourage a fruitful discussion that ultimately allows your child to come to their own understandings.

- **Have an understanding of the pressure that teen's experience on a daily basis**

- We know that teens are facing an immense amount of pressure around intimate relationships. These pressures have intensified due to our immediate access to the internet and the influx of media messages. Thus, it is important for you to understand that your child is navigating life in a complicated world. Take the time to listen and help your teen think through situations in a shame-free, non-judgmental space.

- **Reassure your child that you are there to help, not judge**

- It is important for your child to know that there are no limits to what they can speak to you about.



- **Focus on the positive**

- Conversations about relationships do not have to focus on abusive behaviors and negative consequences. Instead, emphasize qualities of healthy relationships so your teen can more easily know what should be prioritized.

- **Accept that your child may not want to talk to you**

- If your child does not want to confide in you, ensure that they do have another trusted adult in their life who can talk with them.

- **Support your child's decisions**

- Parenting adolescents is no easy task – especially when it comes to helping them navigate their way through intimate relationships. However, we need to accept that your child knows their world best, thus the decisions they make may not be the ones that you make. Respect their decisions, as long as the decisions do not put them in harm's way, and work on empowering them to make the best and healthiest decisions.

Conversation Starters

The questions in this section simply provide some inspiration for how you can start a conversation with your teen about unhealthy relationships. Sparking these conversations is a crucial component of preventing abuse. Opening up the space to have these conversations sends a signal to your child that you not only care about their relationship wellbeing but are willing to have difficult and sometimes awkward discussions. These questions can lead to a conversation about what is happening in your teen's relationships or get them thinking for themselves about kind of relationship they want to be in.



- **General:** *How are things going?*

There is a reason TDV is not often talked about. It can be can be awkward and uncomfortable. So, instead of immediately diving into talking about abuse, start the conversation with a general question.

- **Focus on Healthy Relationships:** *What makes a relationship healthy? What do you value or find important in your relationships? What does respect look like in a relationship? What kind of relationship do you want?*

Conversations about dating abuse do not have to be focused on abuse. If you are having a hard time talking to your child about abusive relationships, then shift the focus and talk to them about healthy relationships. It is important for teens to do some internal investigation to know what qualities they value in a partner and what kind of relationship they want to be in.

- **Recognizing Abuse:** *What qualities do you find unattractive? What are the relationships like that you have witnessed at school or among your friends? Have you ever seen a couple act in a way that made you uncomfortable or concerned? Have you ever been in a similar situation?*

While abusive relationships do not need to be the sole focus of these conversations, it is important to address them so adolescents are will be able to recognize unhealthy behaviors. You may find your child more willing to talk if you open up the conversation to relationships beyond their own, such as friends, family, or neighbors. Furthermore, by asking them about relationships other than their own you can gain an understanding of how they perceive relationships.

- **Planning:** *What would you do if you witnessed or experienced dating violence? What would you do if you felt uncomfortable, controlled, pressured, or threatened?*

We want young people to know the realities of teen dating violence because we know it happens too often. And if your teen ever finds themselves, or someone they know and care about in an unhealthy situation, then our hope is that they are prepared to respond.

Safety Planning

If your child or someone you know is experiencing an abusive relationship, we encourage you to develop a safety plan. A safety plan is a plan of action to reduce the risk of further harm and improve safety. A safety plan can be developed for each situation; while experiencing abuse, while preparing to leave an unhealthy situation, or after leaving an abusive relationship, which we know to be a particularly explosive time. Each safety plan is unique to the individual and their circumstances. It should include important information to help prepare and respond to different scenarios. Developing a safety plan can be life-saving, as it is always better to think through situations beforehand, rather than responding in moments of crisis.

We encourage you to visit [Loveisrespect.org](https://loveisrespect.org), and utilize their safety planning tool, as it is comprehensive. Furthermore, they have help readily available to think and talk through various situations and plans.



***Nobody deserves to be abused.
Free and confidential help is always available.***

For immediate help, please call 911

**NAM's Family Violence Center Hotline
is available 24/7
281.885.HOPE (4673)**

**Love is Respect is the national leading organization
combating teen dating violence.**

**They have a series of options for you to reach
an advocate:**

Call: 1.866.331.9474

Text: LOVEIS to 22522

Chat Online: loveisrespect.org

SECTION 7: Update on FVC Prevention Education



Our Violence Prevention Educator, Marina Montemayor, is excited to continue delivering our violence prevention programs this year. She will continue to focus on delivering our program, Dating with Respect, which is a one-time program that covers Teen Dating Violence fundamentals as well as resources for students to utilize if they find themselves in an unhealthy situation. The program is a great start to getting these conversations started among students.

We will continue to offer three different options, in the hopes that one will suit your classroom needs.

In-Person: She can always present in-person, however, please note that COVID-19 cases will be closely monitored leading up to the scheduled presentation.

ZOOM: Facilitating this program via Zoom or any other online video platform is always an option.

Video: We have a prerecorded video that is approximately 30 minutes long. If you wish to utilize the video, email a request for the registration form as well as the passcode to access the video via Youtube.

Please feel free to contact Marina at mmontemayor@namonline.org, or call (281) 885-4669, to book a presentation, request the video registration form, or gather more information!

Thank you for being a part of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month 2021 and our efforts to end Teen Dating Violence. We cannot do this without you!



Sección 5: Información para padres y cuidadores

No se puede enfatizar lo suficiente que la violencia en las relaciones entre adolescentes es sorprendentemente alta. Es probable que su hijo ya haya comenzado a tener citas, tal vez incluso más en serio de lo que usted cree. Las relaciones entre adolescentes son a menudo intensas y abrumadoras; fácilmente pueden tomar el control y convertirse en su mundo entero. Entonces, la verdad es que la violencia dentro de la vida amorosa de su hijo podría ya ser una realidad. Desafortunadamente, este problema no se toma en serio, ya que muchos cuidadores se les es difícil pensar que sus hijos tienen relaciones íntimas, y mucho menos violentas. Sin embargo, dados los hechos, la investigación y lo que sabemos del trabajo, nuestros jóvenes merecen que nos lo tomemos en serio, especialmente porque los adolescentes que cometen o experimentan abuso en sus primeras relaciones de pareja están en mayor riesgo de formar patrones de abuso que pueden continuar en su vida adulta.



Sabemos que puede resultarle incómodo reconocer que su hijo está involucrado en una relación íntima. Además, entendemos que saber, o incluso sospechar, que su hijo está o podría estar involucrado en una situación de abuso es aterrador y lo último en lo que quiere pensar. A pesar de la incomodidad de este tema, debemos aceptar la realidad de las relaciones íntimas entre adolescentes si queremos tener un impacto real. Como cuidador, usted juega un papel crucial en ayudarlos a desarrollar relaciones saludables y empoderarlos para que sepan cuándo es el momento de decir adiós a una relación. La buena noticia alentadora es que se puede prevenir la violencia en las parejas adolescentes; los cuidadores deben ser parte de los esfuerzos. Los padres pueden hacer mucho para intervenir y ayudar. Solo requiere un poco de aprendizaje y el compromiso de llegar, escuchar y hablar con sus hijos.

Algunas señales a tener en cuenta en su hijo:

La violencia en las citas entre adolescentes es una epidemia silenciosa pero generalizada. A menudo pasa desapercibido porque las víctimas que sufren abusos no confían en los adultos. El CDC informa que solo el 67% de los adolescentes que experimentan alguna forma de abuso en el noviazgo nunca se lo cuentan a nadie. Así, en esos momentos en los que un joven está sufriendo en silencio, es importante que seamos capaces de reconocer las señales de alerta para poder intervenir y ayudar antes de que se vuelva violento.

- Pierden interés en actividades que solían disfrutar
- Cambios en la personalidad, como ansiedad o depresión
- Cambios dramáticos en la ropa o el maquillaje
- Portándose mal o empesando a guardar secretos
- Cambios en los hábitos de alimento o de sueño
- Dejan de ver a sus amigos o familiares y pasan la mayoría del rato con su pareja
- Se disculpan por el comportamiento de su pareja y constantemente da excusas o explicaciones
- Ves celos extremos en la relación
- Hay consumo de alcohol, tabaco u otras drogas
- Su hijo tiene lesiones inexplicables y cualquier explicación que ofrezca no tiene sentido



Consejos y trucos

Algunos consejos y trucos para tener en cuenta cuando hable con su hijo sobre las relaciones saludables y no saludables.

- **Encuentra el tiempo y el espacio adecuado**

- Es importante crear un espacio seguro para tener una conversación productiva con su hijo. En primer lugar, evite hacerle saber a su hijo que desea hablar con él frente a otras personas. En segundo lugar, la conversación debe tener lugar en un lugar privado y cómodo.



- **Escucha**

- Deje que su hijo dirija la conversación. Deles el espacio y el tiempo para hablar, para contar su historia.

- **Fomente reflexiones abiertas, honestas y sin vergüenza**

- Evite descartar sus pensamientos como incorrectos, sino más bien fomente una discusión fructífera que, en última instancia, le permita a su hijo llegar a su propio entendimiento.

- **Comprender la presión que experimenta el adolescente a diario**

- Sabemos que los adolescentes se enfrentan a una inmensa presión en torno a las relaciones íntimas. Estas presiones se han intensificado debido a nuestro acceso inmediato a Internet y la afluencia de mensajes de los medios. Por lo tanto, es importante que comprenda que su hijo está navegando por la vida en un mundo complicado. Tómese el tiempo para escuchar y ayudar a su adolescente a pensar en situaciones en un espacio libre de vergüenza y sin juicios.

- **Asegúrele a su hijo que usted está ahí para ayudar, no para juzgar**

- Es importante que su hijo sepa que no hay límites para lo que puede hablar con usted.



- **Centrarse en lo positivo**

- Las conversaciones sobre las relaciones no tienen que centrarse en comportamientos abusivos y consecuencias negativas. En cambio, enfatice las cualidades de las relaciones saludables para que su adolescente pueda saber más fácilmente qué debe priorizarse.

- **Acepte que es posible que su hijo no quiera hablar con usted**

- Si su hijo no quiere confiar en usted, asegúrese de que tenga otro adulto de confianza en su vida que pueda hablar con él.

- **Apoye las decisiones de su hijo**

- Ser padres de adolescentes no es una tarea fácil, especialmente cuando se trata de ayudarlos a navegar a través de las relaciones íntimas. Sin embargo, debemos aceptar que su hijo conoce mejor su mundo, por lo que es posible que las decisiones que tomen no sean las que usted tome. Respete sus decisiones, siempre y cuando las decisiones no los pongan en peligro, y trabaje para empoderarlos para que tomen las mejores y más saludables decisiones.

Iniciadores de conversación

Las preguntas de esta sección simplemente brindan algo de inspiración sobre cómo puede iniciar una conversación con su hijo adolescente sobre las relaciones poco saludables. Iniciar estas conversaciones es un componente crucial para prevenir el abuso. Abrir el espacio para tener estas conversaciones envía una señal a su hijo de que usted no solo se preocupa por el bienestar de su relación, sino que está dispuesto a tener discusiones difíciles y, a veces, incómodas. Estas preguntas pueden llevar a una conversación sobre lo que está sucediendo en las relaciones de su adolescente o hace que piensen por sí mismos sobre el tipo de relación en la que quieren estar.



- **General:** *¿Cómo van las cosas?*

Hay una razón por la cual no se habla a menudo de TDV. Puede ser extraño e incómodo. Entonces, en lugar de sumergirse inmediatamente en hablar sobre el abuso, comience la conversación con una pregunta general.

- **Centrarse en las relaciones saludables:** *¿Qué hace que una relación sea saludable? ¿Qué valora o encuentra importante en sus relaciones? ¿Cómo se ve el respeto en una relación? ¿Qué tipo de relación quieres?*

Las conversaciones sobre el abuso en el noviazgo no tienen que centrarse en el abuso. Si tiene dificultad hablando con su hijo sobre las relaciones abusivas, cambie el enfoque y hable sobre las relaciones saludables. Es importante que los adolescentes realicen una investigación interna para saber qué cualidades valoran en una pareja y en qué tipo de relación quieren tener.

- **Reconocer el abuso:** *¿Qué cualidades encuentra poco atractivas? ¿Cómo son las relaciones que has presenciado en la escuela o entre tus amigos? ¿Alguna vez has visto a una pareja actuar de una manera que los hizo sentir incómodo o preocupado? ¿Has estado alguna vez en una situación similar?*

Si bien las relaciones abusivas no tienen por qué ser el único enfoque de estas conversaciones, es importante abordarlas para que los adolescentes puedan reconocer comportamientos no saludables. Es posible que su hijo esté más dispuesto a platicar si abre la conversación a relaciones más allá de las suyas, como amigos, familiares o vecinos. Además, al preguntarles sobre otras relaciones que no sean las suyas, puede comprender cómo ellos perciben las relaciones.

- **Planificación:** *¿Qué haría si fuera testigo o experimentara violencia en tu noviazgo? ¿Qué harías si te sintieras incómodo, controlado, presionado o amenazado?*

Queremos que los jóvenes conozcan la realidad de la violencia en el noviazgo adolescente porque sabemos que sucede con frecuencia. Y si su hijo adolescente alguna vez se encuentra a sí mismo, o a alguien preocupa, en una situación poco saludable, entonces esperamos que esté preparado para responder.

Planificación de seguridad

Si su hijo o alguien que conoce está experimentando una relación abusiva, le recomendamos que desarrolle un plan de seguridad. Un plan de seguridad es un plan de acción para reducir el riesgo de daños mayores y mejorar la seguridad. Se puede desarrollar un plan de seguridad para cada situación; mientras sufre abuso, mientras se prepara para huir de una situación poco saludable o después de dejar una relación abusiva, que sabemos que es un momento particularmente explosivo. Cada plan de seguridad es único para el individuo y sus circunstancias. Debe incluir información importante para ayudar a prepararse y responder a diferentes situaciones. Desarrollar un plan de seguridad puede salvar vidas, ya que siempre es mejor pensar en las situaciones de antemano, en lugar de responder en momentos de crisis.

Le recomendamos que visite [Loveisrespect.org](https://loveisrespect.org) y utilice su herramienta de planificación de seguridad, ya que es completa. Además, tienen ayuda disponible para analizar y hablar sobre diversas situaciones y planes.



***Nadie merece ser abusado.
Siempre hay ayuda gratuita y confidencial disponible.***

Para obtener ayuda inmediata, llame al 911

**Línea directa del Centro de violencia familiar
de NAM está disponible 24/7
281.885.HOPE (4673)**

**Love is Respect es la organización líder a nivel nacional que
combate la violencia en los noviazgos entre adolescentes.**

**Tienen una serie de opciones para que usted se comuniquen
con un defensor:**

Llama: 1.866.331.9474

Manda un mensaje: LOVEIS to 22522

En línea: loveisrespect.org