

NEW MEXICO 2008 TEEN DATING VIOLENCE  
AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WEEK



*A Toolkit for Teen Dating Violence  
Awareness and Prevention*



STATE OF NEW MEXICO EXECUTIVE OFFICE SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

# Proclamation

*WHEREAS, 1 in 3 female teenagers in a dating relationship has feared for her physical safety, and 1 in 5 teenagers in a serious relationship reports having been hit, slapped, or pushed by a partner; and*

*WHEREAS, 27 percent of teenagers have been in dating relationships in which their partners called them names or put them down, and 29 percent of girls who have been in a relationship said that they have been pressured to have sex or to engage in sexual activities that they did not want; and*

*WHEREAS, abusers are taking advantage of new technologies like cell phones and the Internet to anonymously and cruelly harass victims in unprecedented ways; and*

*WHEREAS, violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications for victims, putting them at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide, and adult re-victimization; and*

*WHEREAS, the severity of violence among intimate partners has been shown to be greater in cases where the pattern of violence has been established in adolescence; and*

*WHEREAS, the establishment of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week will benefit schools, communities, and families regardless of socio-economic status, race, or sex;*

*NOW, THEREFORE I, Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, do hereby proclaim the week of February 4-8, 2008 as:*

## ***“Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week”***

*throughout the State of New Mexico.*

Attest:

*Mary Herrera*  
Mary Herrera  
Secretary of State

Done at the Executive Office this  
14<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2008.

Witness my hand and the Great Seal  
of the Great State of New Mexico

*Bill Richardson*  
Bill Richardson  
Governor



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2008 is an exciting year for innovation and change with New Mexico in the lead. This year, New Mexico successfully developed a unique collaboration reaching across many departments and systems by joining the nation in recognizing Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week, held *February 4-8, 2008*.

The New Mexico Department of Health Office of School and Adolescent Health and Children, Youth and Families Department would like to extend their heartfelt appreciation to the following people and the organizations they represent for their collaborative partnership in honoring New Mexico's first ever Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week:

**Governor Bill Richardson and First Lady Barbara Richardson**

**Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish**

**Dr. Alfredo Vigil, Secretary, New Mexico Department of Health**

**Dorian Dodson, Secretary, New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department**

Francine Anaya, Clinical Director, Children, Youth and Families Department

Yolanda Cordova, Director, Department of Health Office of School and Adolescent Health

Tessa Medina-Lucero, Adolescent Health Coordinator, DOH Office of School and Adolescent Health

Kristine Meurer, Program Director, Public Education Department

Mary Molina Mescal, Executive Director, New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women

New Mexico Domestic Violence Leadership Commission

Gwendolyn Packard, Executive Director, New Mexico Suicide Prevention Coalition

Sharon Pino, Governor's Domestic Violence Czar

KC Quirk, Executive Director, Albuquerque Rape Crisis Center

Sylvia Ruiz, Director, New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition

Giovanna Rossi, Executive Director, Governor's Women's Health Advisory Council

Chris Schueler, President and CEO, Christopher Productions

Julienne Smrcka, Executive Director, New Mexico Children's Cabinet

Howard Spiegelman, Executive Director, New Mexico Alliance for School-Based Healthcare

Sherry Spitzer, Interim Director, New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Norma Rey Vázquez de Houdek, Youth Suicide Coordinator, DOH Office of School and Adolescent Health

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# NEW MEXICO 2008 TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WEEK

## Cell Phones, Computers and the Internet can be Weapons of Relationship Violence!

Young people in relationships are being stalked, controlled, threatened, & humiliated through cell phones & the Internet.

~71% of teens regard boyfriends or girlfriends spreading rumors about them on cell phones & social networking (ex. MySpace) sites as a serious problem.

~Almost 1/3 of young people say their partners text them between 10 & 30 times an hour asking where they are, what they're doing, or who they're with.

~One in four teens in a relationship (25%) say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cell phones & texting.

~One in five teens in a relationship (22%) has been asked to engage in cell phone- or chat-sex when they didn't want to. (*Love is Not Abuse*, 2007)

## Background

By signing the *Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week Proclamation* on January 14, 2008, Governor Bill Richardson leads New Mexico in becoming one of the principle states nationwide tackling teen dating violence. To be held **February 4-8, 2008** and resulting from an expansive multisystemic collaboration, the New Mexico Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week is the first of its kind in the state. This initiative was nationally recognized in 2006 as Senate Resolution 388. Championed by Senators Crapo of Idaho and Clinton of New York in partnership with young people and the American Bar Association, this initiative gives voice to the importance of heightening public awareness of the prevalence of teen dating violence nationwide. In celebrating Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week, New Mexico is taking a crucial first step in ending dating abuse.

Startling are the sheer numbers of young people who experience teen dating violence. Nationally, one in three girls who have been in a serious relationship report they worry about being physically hurt by their partner. One in five teens who have been in a serious relationship report being hit, slapped or pushed by a partner. Twenty three percent of teens that had been physically or sexually assaulted by a dating partner reported the abuse to no one (*Love is Not Abuse* (2006) Survey Results and SafeState.org Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet). The results of teen dating violence can be as lethal as adult domestic violence. Of the female adolescents between the ages 16-19 murdered each year from 1990-1999, 22% are killed by intimate partners (*Bureau of Justice Statistics Press Release* (2001), *Violence Among Intimate Partners*).

Based on these compelling statistics, a need to develop an understanding of the unique aspects of teen dating violence has emerged in order to offer youth-relevant prevention and intervention. Teens face special challenges when confronted with abuse in intimate relationships. Young people are newly learning to navigate the complexities of intimate relationships and may have difficulty in identifying control and abuse. Young people are reluctant to ask for support from adults and rely heavily on their peers for guidance. When their peers tolerate or promote dating violence as a social norm, it places young people at greater risk for more severe abuse.

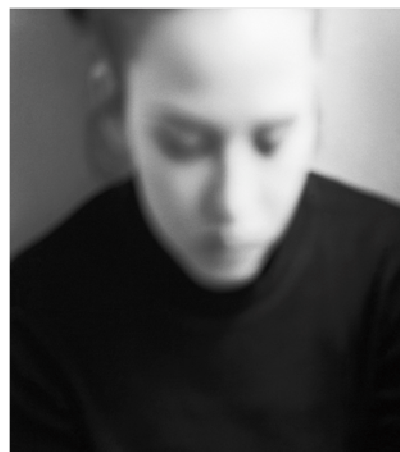
When young people do request support, they may find some options open to adult victims are not available to them. Adult survivors can get safe by going to a domestic violence shelter, but shelters may only allow for short stays without parental consent. Some states don't have the same availability for protection orders for young people as they do for adults. Sometimes, even when a protection order is issued, it may have some unintended consequences, like having to make school or job changes.

Please join our Governor, the New Mexico Departments of Health, Children, Youth and Families, and Public Education, the New Mexico Children's Cabinet, Domestic Violence Leadership Commission and Commission on the Status of Women in celebrating this opportunity to strengthen the resiliency, safety, and well-being of New Mexico's young people.

## START WITH THE FACTS: Prevalence of Teen Dating Violence in New Mexico

To begin your journey in promoting teen dating violence awareness and prevention, it may be helpful to know some facts about state and national prevalence and effects of teen dating violence:

- One in ten students in New Mexico reports having been physically abused by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months and over 8% reported being forced to have sex, with girls reporting at twice the frequency of their male peers (*New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey, 2005*, retrieved January 7, 2008, from <http://www.health.state.nm.us/pdf/2005YRRSstatewideReport.pdf>).
- In the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women's 2006 *Dreams and Sorrows Report* of 158 girls, 33.3% reported histories of physical or emotional abuse from their families, 27.8% stated they were abused by a family member, and 18.1% said they were abused by their dating partner (New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women (2006) *Dreams and Sorrows Report*).
- During the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women's *Believe in New Mexico Girls 2007: On the Road Project*, dating violence was defined as "intentional verbal, emotional, physical and psychological attacks on one partner by the other partner in a dating relationship." Town halls were conducted in five communities with 236 girls. The girls voiced the following recommendations for meaningfully addressing dating violence (New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women (2007). *Believe in New Mexico Girls: On the Road Project*, Final Report, pg. 8):
  - "Establish programs to promote self-confidence, and programs that provide support for the whole family.
  - Stricter laws are needed concerning the domestic abuser, possibly longer sentences to provide protection.
  - More economically accessible counseling is needed to educate about domestic violence and self-worth.
  - Staff in these programs should be trained to specifically work with teens.
  - Funding for domestic violence shelters is needed to offer trainings to parents with information on teen dating violence.
  - Orders for Protection should be available to teenagers. Girls felt they should not have to rely on parents to file for Orders for Protection if they are in danger.
  - The girls felt the system needed to do a better job of protecting people and there was an overall consensus that offenders found guilty needed longer sentences.
  - And, Victims should be able to track their abusers throughout the system."
- In January, 2008, DOH Office of School and Adolescent Health (OSAH) administered a convenience survey to a diverse array of young people and adults statewide. One hundred fifty-one responses were received, yielding the following preliminary results (DOH OSAH, *Teen Dating Violence in New Mexico Preliminary Report of 2008*):
  - 60% believe that teen dating violence was a "moderate problem", with an additional 24% identifying teen dating violence as a severe problem in their communities.
  - Participants were evenly divided regarding the reporting of teen dating violence, where 36.5% believe it is moderately underreported and 36.5% view it as severely under-reported.



"TEENS FACE THE BARRIER OF NOT TRUSTING ANYONE ENOUGH TO TELL THEM ABOUT THE ABUSE" ~ YOUNG PERSON RESPONDING TO TEEN DATING VIOLENCE IN NEW MEXICO SURVEY

*“Teen Dating Violence is a huge problem, especially in New Mexico. Teen Dating Violence often gets swept under the rug and it is seen as ‘teen behavior.’ We need to educate our teens about domestic violence as well as the entire New Mexico community!”*

*~ Teen Dating Violence in New Mexico Survey Respondent*

- Though many responded they were unsure of what services were offered for abused teens, others identified that domestic violence (74.3%), behavioral health (70.3%), and medical services (53.4%) were the most widely offered services in their communities. A number of responses underscored the importance of developing and providing teen-specific services.
- Participants identified the greatest barrier teens face in getting safe is the belief that dating violence is a normative part of relationships (59.6%). Participants saw teens’ beliefs that the perpetrator will change as the second greatest barrier to getting safe (52.3%), with internalizing responsibility for the abuse (35.8%), witnessing domestic violence at home (33.8%), feeling shame or embarrassment about the abuse (33.1%), as other critical barriers teens face when seeking safety.

## **MORE HELPFUL FACTS: The Impact of Teen Dating Violence on Health and Wellness Outcomes**

- Relationship violence against women is a major public health concern (Silverman, J., et al. (2001), Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality, retrieved August 31, 2007, from <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/286/5/572> ).
- Young women ages 16-24 years old are at greater risk for relationship violence than women in any other age range, at almost triple the rate of the national average (Teen Dating Violence Facts (2006), American Bar Association, retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teendating/facts.pdf>).
- Approximately one in five high school students who are female reports experiencing physical or sexual abuse by their intimate partner (Teen Dating Violence Facts (2006), American Bar Association, retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teendating/facts.pdf>).
- Fifty-eight percent of survivors of sexual assault report being raped between the ages of 12-24 and, in nine out of ten sexual assaults where the offender is under 18, the victim is also a minor (Teen Dating Violence Facts (2006), American Bar Association, retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teendating/facts.pdf>).
- In the first large-scale study of the prevalence of dating violence against adolescent girls, a clear correlation between relationship violence and teen pregnancy and suicide attempts emerged (Harvard School of Public Health Press Release (2001), retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/2001-releases/press07312001.html>).
- Girls who experience relationship violence are significantly more likely to engage in at-risk behaviors, including binge drinking, cocaine and nicotine abuse, risky sexual behaviors and disordered eating (Harvard School of Public Health Press Release (2001), retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/2001-releases/press07312001.html>).

- These young women were at a four to six times greater risk for becoming pregnant and at an eight to nine times greater risk for attempting suicide within the past year (Harvard School of Public Health Press Release (2001), retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/2001-releases/press07312001.html>). Stigma resulting from experiencing relationship violence may lead to elevated suicide attempts (Silverman, J., et al. (2001), Dating Violence Against Adolescent Girls and Associated Substance Use, Unhealthy Weight Control, Sexual Risk Behavior, Pregnancy, and Suicidality, retrieved August 31, 2007, from <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/286/5/572>).
- A study completed with 474 young mothers accessing publicly funded medical care in 1998 demonstrated a strong correlation between teen relationship violence and birth control sabotage, where a majority (55%) of teen mothers experienced relationship violence within the past year (Center for Impact Research, 2000, summary retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.impactresearch.org/documents/birthcontrolexecutive.pdf>).
- Of these young women, a majority also experienced at least one type of birth control sabotage during their relationships, including verbal sabotage (51%) such as being labeled promiscuous for using birth control, and behavioral sabotage (14%) like experiencing physical abuse if requesting the use of condoms or being forced to have sex without protection (Center for Impact Research, 2000, full article retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.impactresearch.org/documents/dva>).
- Work- and school-related sabotage were also reported by 34-57% of young women in this study, including experiencing physical violence when attempting to go to work or school, destruction of school or work documents, being kept up all night before school or work, and destruction of clothes or important items so they cannot go to work or school (Center for Impact Research, 2000, full article retrieved September 3, 2007, from <http://www.impactresearch.org/documents/dva>).

■ Teen dating violence runs across race, gender, and socioeconomic lines. Both males and females are victims, but boys and girls are abusive in different ways:

- Girls are more likely to yell, threaten to hurt themselves, pinch, slap, scratch, or kick;
- Boys injure girls more severely and frequently;
- Some teen victims experience violence occasionally;
- Others are abused more often...sometimes daily.

*"Teen Victim Project," National Center for Victims of Crime, <http://www.nvcv.org/tvp>, (Last visited 10/5/04).*

### **Promoting Positive Youth Development is Key in Teen Dating Violence Prevention.**

Begin by empowering young people through helping them identify resources that make them strong and powerful in the face of violence, including:

~Supporting youth resiliency through strengthening the 40 Adolescent Developmental Assets (*see resource list*).

~Fostering connections with friends and loved ones who will help them get safe and heal.

~Encouraging speaking out about the violence by telling friends, mentors, social workers and adults at school or work what relationship violence is and how to help.

~Mentoring young people in lobbying for more resources at the State legislation.

~ Partnering with a group of teens to support violence prevention through the *Teen Action Toolkit* (*see resource list*).

# Suggested Activities for Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week

The week of February 4-8, 2008, is an ideal time to heighten awareness of Teen Dating Violence in your homes, schools, communities and workplaces. Here are a few suggestions for activities that can be organized at no or little cost:

## Preparation Activities

- Begin by downloading and reviewing the Teen Dating Violence Prevention Recommendations for Teens, Parents and Professionals (<http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teenabuseguide.pdf>). Sections of the booklet, such as Facts and Warning Signs, can be stand-alone documents you can distribute to others.
- You can also buy the "Dating And Violence Should Never Be A Couple" DVD, a film where teenagers speak about their own experiences with teen dating violence, by going to the ABA web store or call 800-285-2221. The Product Code is 3070001. It costs \$4.50 and includes a free Teen Dating Violence Prevention Poster. A phenomenal New Mexico resource for films on Teen issues that can be shown during this week is Christopher Productions, <http://www.christopherproductions.org/>, the creators of *See Mommy Cry* and *Girls Challenges and Choices* (To purchase these dvds, go to <http://www.safeteenm.org/index.html>).
- Create a planning committee at your organization by joining together young people and adults to prepare for the week's activities. Consider creating a ribbon campaign, designing posters, or a community-wide media blitz with information on teen dating violence (see <http://seeitandstopit.org/pages/pdf/projects.pdf>).
- Contact Anna Nelson, LISW, Behavioral Health Manager of the DOH Office of School and Adolescent Health, for more information at [anna.nelson@state.nm.us](mailto:anna.nelson@state.nm.us) or 505.841.5877.

## Week Events

You can host a kickoff event to showcase your community's specific issues regarding teen dating violence. Invite interested stakeholders and policy makers to your event. Use resources like the "Dating and Violence Should Never Be a Couple" DVD or encourage a youth survivor of teen dating violence or a teen dating or domestic violence specialist speak at your event.

Throughout the week, share more information about teen dating violence warning signs, dynamics, and resources for support in your community. Encourage schools to dedicate class periods throughout the week to discuss dating violence and ways to prevent it. Examples of class-time activities can be found at <http://seeitandstopit.org/pages/pdf/projects.pdf>.

## Ongoing Prevention Efforts

We applaud your our participation in National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week and your efforts to increase awareness of teen dating violence among New Mexico's youth. Continue your work to end teen dating violence by engaging with young people, your school personnel and health centers, members of the community, local organizations and your community leaders to strategize about next steps. Through these activities, we can join together to support New Mexico's youth as thriving, safe, and resilient teens.

# Resources for Teen Dating Violence Awareness, Prevention, and Support

## New Mexico Resources

New Mexico Alliance of School Based Health Care: <http://www.nmassembly.org/osh.html>

New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence: [www.nmcadv.org](http://www.nmcadv.org) or 505.246.9240.

New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women (Believe in Girls 2007: On the Road Project)  
<http://www.womenscommission.state.nm.us/> or 505.841.8920

New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition: <http://www.safeteennm.org/index.html> or 505.254.8737

New Mexico 2005 Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey:  
<http://www.health.state.nm.us/pdf/2005YRRSStatewideReport.pdf>

SafeTeen New Mexico: Helping Youth Make Healthy Decisions <http://www.safeteennm.org/index.html>

## Positive Youth Development

40 Developmental Assets for Teens: <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/assetlists.html>

Department of Health Office of School and Adolescent Health website: *Coming Soon!*

## Teen Dating Violence Resources

American Bar Association's Teen Dating Violence Toolkit with Day-By-Day Instructions for National Awareness and Prevention Week: <http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teendating/toolkitinstructions.pdf>

Love is Not Abuse (Includes a Parent's Guide to Teen Dating Violence and Love is Not Abuse Curriculum for Schools):  
<http://www.loveisnotabuse.com/>

Love is Respect National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: <http://loveisrespect.com/> or 866.331.9474/866.331.8453 TTY, 24 Hr.

The National Center for Victims of Crime Teen Victim Project: [http://www.ncvc.org/tvp/main.aspx?dbID=dash\\_Home](http://www.ncvc.org/tvp/main.aspx?dbID=dash_Home)

The Safe Space.org (Provides a free online class called Relationships 101) at <http://www.thesafespace.org/relationships101.html>

See It and Stop It Toolkit <http://seecitandstopit.org/pages/getorg/toolkit.html>

Teen Action Toolkit: Building a Youth-led Response to Teen Victimization  
<http://www.ncvc.org/ncvc/AGP.Net/Components/documentViewer/Download.aspxnz?DocumentID=43491>

Teen Equality Wheel: <http://www.ncdsv.org/images/TeenEqualitywheelNOSHADING-NCDSV.pdf>

Teen Power and Control Wheel: <http://www.ncdsv.org/images/Teen%20P&C%20wheel%20NO%20SHADING.pdf> .

Teen Dating Violence Prevention Recommendations for Teens, Parents and Professionals:  
<http://www.abanet.org/unmet/teenabuseguide.pdf>