

2023 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Toolkit

1 in 3
teens will
experience
dating abuse



Learn how you can help

About TDVAM:

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM), a time to educate the community about the prevalence of dating abuse among teenagers and young adults.

Did you know that 1 in 3 teens will experience at least one incident of dating abuse between their freshmen and senior years of high school?

Dating abuse is a pattern of coercive or controlling behavior where one person uses fear and intimidation to gain power over their partner. Regardless of a person's race, ethnicity, income level, gender, sexuality, or education level, they can experience emotional, sexual, or physical violence. This year, Love is Respect chose the theme ***"be about it"*** to encourage people to be unapologetically about education, empowerment, and engagement.

be about it.

How Can JBWS Help?

For more than 45 years, JBWS has strived to help survivors of domestic violence and prevent abuse at its source.

After recognizing a troubling pattern of abuse in teenagers and young adults in the 1980s, JBWS developed a Dating Abuse Prevention Program (DAPP), known as No2DatingAbuse.

This program promotes dating abuse prevention through awareness, education, engagement, and leadership opportunities. No2DatingAbuse focuses on education about the warning signs of abuse and teaching how to recognize indicators of healthy relationships.

Get Involved:

Anyone can participate in Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and become an advocate for healthy relationships. You don't need to be a teenager, know a teenager or be the guardian of a

young adult. TDVAM is a time to show your support for healthy relationships at all ages. Below you will find numerous ways to get involved during this year's TDVAM!

Ways to Participate in TDVAM:

Invite JBWS for a lunch and learn: We would love to come to your business or organization and speak about teen dating violence and how you can help.

Wear orange all month: Show your support for healthy relationships by wearing the color orange throughout the month of February!

Engage with No2DatingAbuse on social media: This can be a powerful tool in raising awareness about Teen Dating Violence. Consider following and sharing No2DatingAbuse's posts.

Check in on your teens: Do you have a teenager in your life? If so, take them out for a coffee or a nice dinner and talk to them about healthy relationships.

Talk about how media portrays relationships: Too often, the relationships depicted on television and in movies are not healthy. Take the time to talk about the characteristics of healthy teen relationships, not just the problematic ones.

Avoid judgment: If a teenager or young adult is in an unhealthy relationship, don't judge them. Foster an open, non-judgmental space for them to communicate with you about their relationship struggles.

Post information about TDVAM: Education is key to stopping teen dating violence. Consider putting information about this issue on your company's intranet or placing a flyer on a bathroom stall.

Host a Gift Card Collection: Share the love this TDVAM by hosting a gift card collection for Amazon, Target, ShopRite, and Kohls. Find more information [here](#).

Information for Peers:

You may be the first person to suspect that your friend is being abused and you may be the person your friend confides in when there is a problem. Before having that conversation, think carefully about what you are going to say and where you will do it. Sometimes just talking about the abuse with the person experiencing it can be dangerous.

If you are worried about your safety or your friend's safety, then speaking with a knowledgeable adult or calling JBWS' 24-Hour Helpline, 1.877.R.U.ABUSED, is a good place to start. You can speak to someone without giving your name.

Find more information on how to support a friend experiencing abuse [here](#).

Did you know?

Dating abuse doesn't only refer to people who are in a relationship with each other. You could experience dating abuse whether you've been with your partner for years, just met a romantic interest last week, or are in some type of situationship. It doesn't matter if your relationship is sexual or not, serious or more casual, queer or straight, monogamous or open to numerous partners, healthy relationships are built on communication, trust, honesty, and equality.



Information for Parents:

As a parent or guardian, it can be scary to think your child might be in an unhealthy relationship. However, it's important to think carefully before having this conversation with your child. Sometimes even broaching the subject of abuse with the person experiencing it can be dangerous.

In fact, the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the person experiencing abuse leaves. It is important not to force your child to immediately cut off this relationship. *Find the Parent Discussion Guide on Youth Healthy Relationships Here.*

Warning Signs of Abuse:

- ▶ *Overly jealous and possessive*
- ▶ *Needs to control the relationship*
- ▶ *Name-calling*
- ▶ *Put-downs*
- ▶ *Keeping tabs*
- ▶ *Constantly texting*
- ▶ *Isolation from family and friends*
- ▶ *Physical roughness*
- ▶ *Threats and intimidation*
- ▶ *Pressure to have sex*
- ▶ *Won't let go of the relationship*



Information for Schools:

Since teenagers and young adults spend a large portion of their time in school, educating students about dating abuse within the classroom is extremely important.

Ways to Participate in TDVAM:

Wear Orange: Wear orange to raise awareness about Teen Dating Violence throughout the month of February to show your support for healthy relationships.

Host an Escalation Screening: for upperclassmen and/or parents. This involves a powerful 40-minute film that portrays an abusive relationship between two college students, followed by a 40-minute debrief and discussion about dynamics of abuse, warning signs, and strategies for getting help.

Social Media: can be a powerful tool in raising awareness about Teen Dating Violence. Consider posting about this issue on Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Instagram, and any other school social media platforms. When posting, consider using the hashtag #teenDVmonth so everyone can follow what is being done at your school.

Use and display: the “We Speak Up Against Dating Violence” photo frame. Consider encouraging students to take photos with this frame and post them on your school’s social media platforms with the hashtag #teenDVmonth

Morning Announcements: can be a great way to remind your fellow students about Teen Dating Violence Awareness month!

Sample Morning Announcements:

- ▶ *Good Morning! Did you know that 1 in 3 teens will experience an incident of dating abuse while in high school? If you or someone you know is experiencing an abusive relationship please reach out to a guidance counselor (or insert names of counselors at your school), a trusted teacher or adult or, JBWS, the domestic violence prevention agency of Morris County.*
- ▶ *There’s no excuse for abuse. 1 in 3 teens will experience dating abuse while in high school. Dating violence can affect anyone, regardless of race, religion, sex or economic status. Shine a light on this growing problem in our society. Know the signs and respect all accordingly. Remember, there’s no excuse for abuse.*
- ▶ *February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. If you or someone you know is in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, seek out a counselor, teacher or an adult you trust. Because everyone deserves to be in a relationship where they feel happy, healthy and respected and where everything that is important to them is respected and valued.*

Wear Orange for TDVAM:

Consider showing your support for healthy relationships and raise awareness about teen dating violence by wearing the color orange throughout February! Share photos on social media depicting how you've added orange into your wardrobe, life, or community by tagging **@No2DatingAbuse** and using the hashtags *#beaboutit* *#TDVAM*

How to get involved

- ▶ *Get your class to wear orange*
- ▶ *Encourage sports teams to wear orange accessories during games*
- ▶ *Paint your nails the color orange*
- ▶ *Put up orange lights at your home*
- ▶ *Use an orange background for virtual meetings or classes*



Social Media:

Social media is a powerful tool for combating dating abuse because of its potential reach. If you post about TDVAM, then people all over the world could potentially learn about physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Since 1 in 3 teenagers experience abuse, it is highly likely that a member of your social circle is currently dealing with this issue. Sharing posts on social media about the services available to those experiencing dating abuse can literally be lifesaving.

Throughout February, No2DatingAbuse will be sharing numerous educational posts about this topic. Please follow our social media accounts for more information.

Follow No2DatingAbuse:



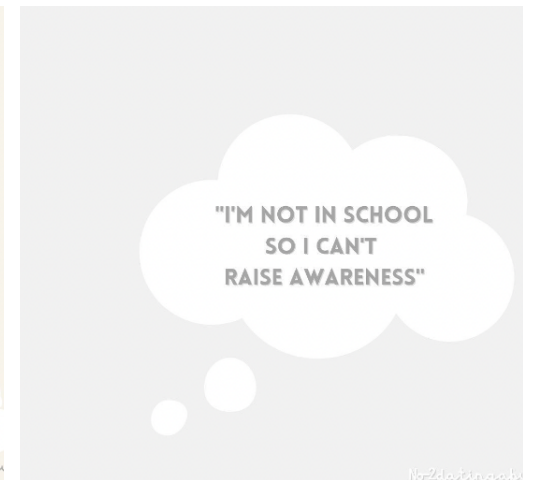
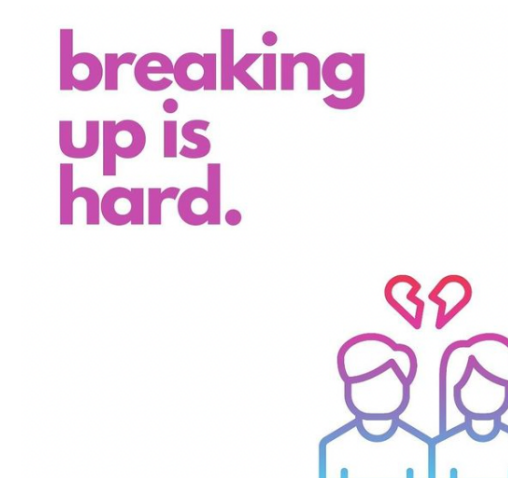
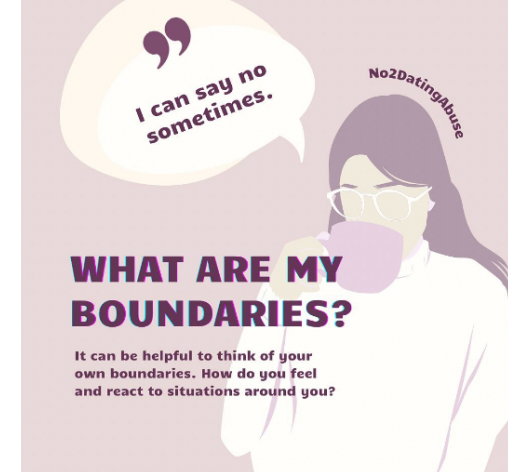
@No2DatingAbuse



@No2DatingAbuse



@No2DatingAbuse



Resources:

Are you interested in learning more about teen dating abuse and domestic violence beyond Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month? Below you will find numerous resources to educational and supportive materials

For more information about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, to schedule a No2DatingAbuse workshop, or to connect a student for teen counseling services, please contact at mhahn@jbws.org or at **(973) 267 – 7520 ext. 136.**

Love is Respect:

- ▶ Is Your Relationship Healthy?
- ▶ How to Set Boundaries
- ▶ Relationships and Cultural Context
- ▶ Understand Consent

Break the Cycle:

- ▶ How Common is Dating Abuse?
- ▶ Know Your Rights
- ▶ Healthy Relationship Quiz
- ▶ Help A Friend

One Love Foundation:

- ▶ 10 Signs of a Healthy Relationship
- ▶ 10 Signs of an Unhealthy Relationship
- ▶ What Unhealthy Relationships Can Look Like Through an LGBTQ+ Lens
- ▶ How to Set and Maintain Boundaries
- ▶ Safety & Break-Up Planning

Futures Without Violence:

- ▶ Connection Between Dating Violence And Unhealthy Behaviors
- ▶ Emerging Issues Facing Teens and Tweens
- ▶ The Facts on Adolescent Pregnancy, Reproductive Risk and Exposure to Dating and Family Violence