



# **Teen Dating Abuse Information for Parents**





**One in three teens knows a friend who has been abused.**

## THE EPIDEMIC OF TEEN DATING ABUSE

Abuse occurs in all types of relationships and among people with varying backgrounds of age, race, religion, financial status, sexual orientation and education. Teen dating abuse is any act that causes harm or threatens the risk of harm to a teen by an individual who is in a current or former dating relationship with that teen. Teen dating abuse may be physical, sexual, financial, verbal or emotional in nature. While abuse often occurs as a pattern of controlling behavior, a single episode of abuse is cause for concern.

Digital dating abuse is a form of verbal and/or emotional abuse perpetrated through the use of technology. One in four dating teens is abused or harassed by a dating partner through technology. These behaviors include unwanted and/or excessive text messaging, harassment through social media and/or social networking sites, and pressure to send/receive unwanted sexual photos and messages. In addition, 96% of teens who experience digital abuse and harassment also experience other forms of violence or abuse from their dating partner.

It is important for parents to be aware of the role that technology plays in the lives of their teens.

## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR FAMILY SAFETY AND HEALING

Through an impressive combination of public and private resources, The Center for Family Safety and Healing fully addresses all aspects of family violence including child abuse and neglect, teen dating abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse. We offer a continuum of research-based prevention, intervention and treatment programs for individuals who have experienced family violence. Benefits of this integrated team approach include:

- A one-stop, coordinated response to family violence for individuals and families through partnerships with law enforcement, children services, prosecution and a wide range of community resources
- Expanded forum for education, advocacy and ongoing research

**Ninety-five percent of teen dating violence victims are females. However, males can also be victims.**

## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

Parents can help by talking about what constitutes a healthy and unhealthy relationship. Start early and have these conversations often. Getting to know your teen's friends and social group is important. Keep in mind that some teens may mistake actions as expressions of "love" when in fact they are warning signs of control. Please assure your teen that they are not to blame for the abuse and that you are available to help them be safe and happy.

If your teen does not want to talk, it does not mean they are not listening. Come back to the conversation at another time. Ask if they would be more comfortable talking with someone else – a friend, counselor, coach or other trusted adult.

Educating yourself about teen dating abuse is important. Learning about the different types of abuse and warning signs is likely to help you recognize if your teen might be experiencing teen dating abuse.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Ohio Law, House Bill 19, requires Ohio school districts to implement the following:

- Include dating violence prevention education in health curricula in grades 7 through 12
- Incorporate dating violence into their policies prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying
- Provide training in dating violence prevention for certain middle and high school employees

Find out how your teen's school has incorporated the law. Perhaps suggest the school invite a speaker from a local domestic violence organization to help. The Center for Family Safety and Healing offers education programs for students in elementary, middle and high school, as well as college.

## Legal Rights for Teens

Ohio Law, House Bill 10, allows teens to obtain a Juvenile Civil Protection Order (JCPO) in common pleas court with juvenile jurisdiction when they experience violence by other teens in their relationships. For more information, please refer to the resource page of this brochure.

**One in four teens report hourly contact with a dating partner between midnight and 5 a.m.**

# WARNING SIGNS OF TEEN DATING ABUSE

## Signs of Being a Victim

- Giving up things that are important
- Isolation from friends
- Dramatic changes in appearance, weight, grades or behavior. These could be signs of depression, which can be an indicator of abuse.
- Unexplainable injuries, or explanations for injuries that don't make sense
- Afraid of partner or fearful of making partner angry
- Preoccupied with and/or apologizes for partner's behavior
- Receives excessive and/or unwanted text messages from partner
- Gives excuses to questions about their relationship, like, "Everything is under control," "It's not your problem."

## Signs of an Abuser

- Loses temper, breaks or hits things
- Argues or fights with other people
- Always texting and/or using technology demanding to know who their partner is with and where their partner has been
- Shows up unexpectedly
- Calls their partner names, says mean things or puts down their partner in front of other people
- Acts extremely jealous when their partner is talking to others

**Twenty-six percent of teen girls in a relationship said they have been threatened with violence or experienced verbal abuse.**

**Twenty-two percent of teens in a relationship have been asked via cell phone or online message to engage in unwanted sexual activity.**

## Reach Out to Boys

Most parents understand the importance of talking with their daughters about learning to stay safe, but it is also important for parents to talk with their sons about healthy relationships.

## RESOURCES

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

### Services for Children & Teens

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- ChildHelp USA: 800-4-A-CHILD (800-422-4453)
- National Runaway Safeline: 800-786-2929
- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: 866-331-9474 (text “loveis” to 22522)
- National Youth Advocate Program: 877-NYAP-CAN (877-692-7226)
- Ohio Children’s Trust Fund: 614-387-5478
- Ohio Child Protective Services: 855-O-H-CHILD (855-642-4453)
- The Center for Family Safety and Healing: 614-722-8200

### Other Programs & Resources

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- BRAVO (LGBTQI Services): 866-862-7286
- National Center for Victims of Crime: 855-4VICTIM (855-484-2846)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (800-273-8255)
- Ohio Attorney General Crime Victim Services: 800-582-2877
- Ohio Domestic Violence Network: 800-934-9840
- Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence: 888-886-8388
- Rape, Abuse & Incest Natl Network (RAINN): 800-656-HOPE (800-656-4673)
- The Center for Family Safety and Healing: 614-722-8200

## ONLINE RESOURCES

- **Break the Cycle: Empowering Youth to End Domestic Violence**  
[www.breakthecycle.org](http://www.breakthecycle.org)
- **Choose Respect**  
[www.cdc.gov/features/datingviolence](http://www.cdc.gov/features/datingviolence)
- **Futures Without Violence**  
[www.futureswithoutviolence.org](http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org)
- **Love is Respect**  
[www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)
- **National Safe Place**  
[www.nationalsafeplace.org/txt-4-help](http://www.nationalsafeplace.org/txt-4-help) text to 44357 (4HELP)
- **That's Not Cool**  
[www.thatsthatcool.com](http://www.thatsthatcool.com)
- **The Center for Family Safety and Healing**  
[www.FamilySafetyandHealing.org](http://www.FamilySafetyandHealing.org)
- **Where's The Line?**  
[www.WheresTheLine.info](http://www.WheresTheLine.info)

## MOBILE APPS

- **Aspire News**  
[www.whengeorgiasmiled.org/aspire-news-app](http://www.whengeorgiasmiled.org/aspire-news-app)
- **BSafe You**  
[www.getbsafe.com](http://www.getbsafe.com)
- **Circle of 6**  
[www.circleof6app.com](http://www.circleof6app.com)
- **One Love – My Plan**  
[www.joinonelove.org/get-help/#myplan](http://www.joinonelove.org/get-help/#myplan)
- **Tech Safety**  
[www.techsafetyapp.org](http://www.techsafetyapp.org)



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[www.FamilySafetyandHealing.org](http://www.FamilySafetyandHealing.org)  
[www.WheresTheLine.info](http://www.WheresTheLine.info)

 [Facebook.com/FamilySafetyandHealing](https://www.facebook.com/FamilySafetyandHealing)

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