Dating Matters™: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships

Teen dating violence is a preventable public health problem. It requires a comprehensive community approach to stop it before it starts.

- One in 10 high school students has experienced physical violence from a dating partner in the past year.
- Among adult victims of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, 22.4% of women and 15.0% of men first experienced some form of partner violence between 11 and 17 years of age.
- Across studies, 15-40% of youth report perpetrating some form of violence towards a dating partner.
- Risk factors for teen dating violence include individual, peer, partner, parent, and neighborhood influences.
- Perpetrating dating violence in adolescence increases the risk of perpetrating violence toward a partner in adulthood.
- Exposure to dating violence significantly affects a range of mental and physical health problems.

Three significant gaps exist in teen dating violence prevention:

- Little is known about what works to prevent dating violence among youth in urban communities with high crime and economic disadvantage.
- Local public health agencies often are not the primary agents for dating violence prevention programming in communities.
- A lack of local data on teen dating violence limits communities’ ability to monitor and track the problem.

To address these issues, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed Dating Matters™: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships, which aims to:

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive approach to promote respectful, nonviolent dating relationships and decrease emotional, physical, and sexual dating violence among youth in high-risk urban communities
- Build local public health capacity to implement evidence-based and evidence-informed violence prevention strategies across the social ecology
- Identify and validate community level indicators of teen dating violence

Dating Matters™: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships employs a comprehensive approach to violence prevention at each level of the social ecology.
The first phase of Dating Matters (2011-2015) is a five-year demonstration phase during which CDC examines the cost, feasibility, sustainability, and effectiveness of a comprehensive approach to teen dating violence in up to four high-risk urban communities.

After the demonstration phase, it is anticipated that the following products developed for Dating Matters™ will be publicly available and free of charge:

- CDC-Developed Teen Dating Violence Prevention Curricula Package*
- Teen Dating Violence Prevention Youth and Parent Curricula Adaptation Package
- Teen Dating Violence Prevention Communications Package
- Teen Dating Violence Prevention Policy Package
- Online Organizational Capacity and Readiness Assessment
- Teen Dating Violence Community-Level Indicators Package
- Teen Dating Violence Outcome Evaluation Package

*if effective in evaluation

Dating Matters™ Educator Training—Dating Matters™: Understanding Teen Dating Violence Prevention—was developed in partnership with Liz Claiborne Inc. and is available at www.vetoviolence.org

It's Everyone's Responsibility to Stop Dating Violence