

**SCHOOLS CAN AND DO
PREVENT DATING ABUSE.
HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!**

- 1** Make your dating abuse policies clear and implement them consistently.

- 2** Train faculty, counselors, nurses and staff to recognize and respond to the signs of abusive relationships.

- 3** Educate youth about healthy relationships and the dynamics of abuse.

- 4** Make sure students know how and where to get help for themselves or a friend.

- 5** Host activities for Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month every February.

Texas Council On
FAMILY VIOLENCE
Over Thirty Years of Building a Safer Texas

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TEEN DATING ABUSE

What Texas Schools Need to Know



**Young Hearts
MATTER**
DATING ABUSE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Dating abuse takes place in all schools—your school can help turn the tide. Here's what you need to know to help students have healthy relationships.

What is teen dating abuse?

Dating abuse takes place when a person physically, sexually, verbally or emotionally abuses another person in the context of a dating or romantic relationship, and when one or both of them is a minor.

Each year in the U.S., at least 400,000 adolescents experience serious physical and/or sexual dating violence.¹

What can it look like on school grounds?

According to a recent study, between 42% and 87% of dating violence occurs in a school building or on school grounds, with highest occurrences in rural schools.²

Teen dating violence (TDV) takes many forms. It can involve: put-downs, extreme demands on time, intimidation, isolation, constant texting, stalking, and physical injury. TDV can also involve forced sex, forced pregnancy, threats of violence or suicide, stalking, and murder.

¹ Futures Without Violence. (2012). *Hanging Out or Hooking Up: Clinical Guidelines on Responding to Adolescent Relationship Abuse, an Integrated Approach to Prevention and Intervention*. San Francisco, CA: Miller, E & Levenson R.

² Jennings, W. G., Higgins, G. E., Tewksbury, R., Gover, A. R., & Piquero, A. R. (2010). A longitudinal assessment of the victim-offender overlap. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25, 2147-2174.

What guidelines apply to my school?

Two sections of the Texas Education Code apply.

Section 37.0831 requires a teen dating abuse policy for all districts that includes a definition of dating violence. The policy must include:

- a definition of dating violence
- sections on safety planning
- enforcement of protective orders
- school-based alternatives to protective orders
- training for teachers and administrators
- counseling for affected students
- awareness education for students and parents/guardians.

Section 28.004 allows domestic violence programs to serve as members of School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs).

“[H]e’d constantly show up at school and cause a scene in front of my friends and then my teachers would talk to me and be like “you can’t do that on school property,” and so... finally I was just so embarrassed I quit school.”

(Debbie, age 18)²



You can do something about dating abuse. Let’s talk about it.

Who can help?

Family violence programs and shelters often provide free dating abuse prevention programs in schools, such as classroom-based curricula or afterschool groups.

LevelsRespect.org, the national dating abuse helpline, can help educators and students safety plan and handle difficult situations. They are available 24/7 by text, chat, or phone.

The Texas Council on Family Violence guides schools to local resources and to national dating abuse prevention lesson plans and curricula. www.tcfv.org or 800-585-1978

Texas Advocacy Project provides free and confidential legal advice and referrals to victims of teen dating violence--and legal representation to minors seeking protective orders or shelter. 1-800-374-HOPE