



February 2-6, 2010 is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week

The Advocates to speak with middle and high school students, and parents about healthy relationships throughout February

Hailey, Idaho, January 29, 2010 — The Advocates for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (www.theadvocates-aplacetogo.org) today announced that it has teamed with the Idaho Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Project to eliminate the prevalence of [teen dating](#) violence. Through the collaborative effort, The Advocates will speak with middle and high school students and parents about [healthy relationships](#), and the latest dating trends throughout the month of February, in honor of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Week, February 2-6, 2010.

“The Advocates is committed to the idea that every teenager deserves to be in a healthy, respectful relationship,” said The Advocates Children’s Program Coordinator Darrel Harris. “Dating violence can happen to anyone and new research shows that it is epidemic. Community education and awareness are key to addressing and preventing teen dating violence. And, teens should know that the abuse is not their fault and that help is available.”

Dating violence is a pattern of abusive or aggressive behavior used in a [dating relationship](#) by one partner to exert control over another partner.

- One in three dating teens will be in an abusive (physically, emotionally or verbally) relationship.
- Half or 50 percent of all dating teens will compromise their own values and belief systems in order to please their partner.
- Nearly 90 percent of parents do not believe that teen dating abuse is an issue.
- Eighty-nine percent of teens between the ages of 13 and 18 say they have been in a dating relationship.

The 2009 Idaho Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports:

- 10.6 percent of Idaho high school students have been hit, slapped, or physically hurt by their boyfriends or girlfriends.
- 9.6 percent of Idaho high school students have been forced to have unwanted sexual intercourse.
- 17.7 percent of Idaho high school students report being electronically bullied in the last 12 months.

Teens who are victims of [dating violence](#) are more likely to report binge drinking, suicide attempts, physical fighting, and sexual activity.

Signs that your child may be in an [abusive relationship](#) include frequently cancelling plans at the last minute for reasons that sound untrue; losing interest in activities that he or she used to enjoy; worrying about making his or her partner angry or upset; or a change in weight appearance, or grades.

- Dating relationships can be abusive even if there is no hitting. Know abuse can be verbal, emotional, sexual, or physical.

- Verbal – calls you names, insults or criticizes you, gets angry very quickly, and threatens to hurt you, someone you know, or themselves.
- Emotional – acts possessive, jealousy, controlling, tells you what to wear, keeps you from friends or activities, calls you frequently to find out where you are or who you're with, refuses to accept the relationship is over, forces you to compromise your beliefs.
- Sexual – any unwanted touching or kissing, forcing you to have sex, or not letting you use birth control.
- Physical – shoves, throws things at you, intimidating you by blocking doors, shoving, slapping, hitting, painful grabbing or pinching, pulling your hair, and strangling you.
- In some relationships the abuse only happens occasionally while in others it can happen every day.

Source: www.nomeansknow.com

Idaho Senator Mike Crapo spearheaded this nationwide initiative to increase public awareness. The initiative was introduced in 2006 and on December 11, 2008, the Senate approved S. Res. 710 by unanimous consent, which declares the week of February 2 - 6, 2009, [National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week](#).

If you want more information on teen dating abuse please call Darrel at The Advocates, 208.788.4191 or visit www.theadvocates-aplacetogo.org

About The Advocates for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Led by executive director Tricia Swartling, The Advocates for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (www.theadvocates-aplacetogo.org) mission is to prevent [domestic violence](#) and sexual assault through education, shelter and supportive services. Since 1991, The Advocates has helped more than 5,000 women and children in our community leave [violent relationships](#) behind and rebuild their lives. The Advocates' free essential services are available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day and include a staffed [shelter](#), counseling, and legal guidance. Vital funding support is realized through the Annual Fund drive. Additional funding sources include The Advocates Attic Thrift Store, the Annual Chip-In for The Advocates Golf Tournament, The Annual Gala Auction, and public and private foundation grants. For more information about supporting, volunteering and services, call The Advocates at 208.788.4191.

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