

love **is**
respect

talk about it

2022 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month • Action Guide



Welcome to Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM)

What is TDVAM?

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM) is a month-long campaign dedicated to raising awareness about teen dating abuse. Every February, young people and their loved ones join together across the country for a national effort to raise awareness about the issue of teen dating violence. Congress declared the month of February to be National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month in 2010.

A message from the Youth Council

Topics like dating abuse and unhealthy relationships can be difficult to talk about, especially for young people. As a member of the love is respect Youth Council, I think that we can reframe and reclaim these essential discussions.

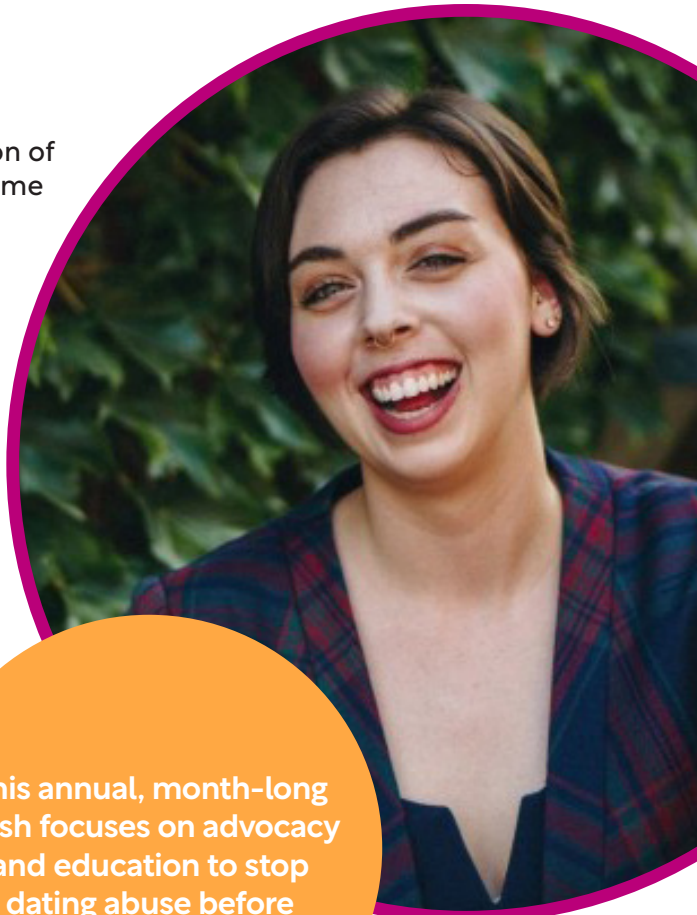
It is important to be authentic about the challenges we face in relationships and the reality that dating violence happens to millions of people, including to people our age. We also must talk about building healthy, meaningful, and equitable relationships. Giving youth and the adults in our lives the tools to have these

conversations is a huge part of the mission of love is respect and why we chose the theme “Talk About It!”

Part of our activities this month will focus on intersectionality: how every aspect of our identity and our current or future partners’ identities impacts our relationships. From my own experience as a queer woman who is in a relationship with a nonbinary person – I know sexuality and gender play a huge role in how we understand each other, how we communicate, and the struggles we may face.

We are all in this together and you deserve to have someone who is passionate about your growth, sees your individuality, and works to understand the intersections of your identity. Join the love is respect Youth Council this month to learn more about your worth and how to build a healthy relationship. Let’s talk about it!

—**Megan**, *love is respect*
Youth Council Member



This annual, month-long push focuses on advocacy and education to stop dating abuse before it starts.

2022 theme: “Talk About It”

Every young person has their own valuable and unique story.

Youth want and deserve to be their authentic selves and have the right to information and support when it comes to dating abuse.

Our collective and shared experiences can empower us and others when we make the time to “Talk About It.” We want youth and the adults in their lives to talk about their experiences in caring, supportive, and real ways.

Talk About It is a call to action for young people and those who support them to engage in meaningful conversations about healthy relationships and navigate behaviors that may be unhealthy or even abusive.

1 in 3 teens in the United States will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse by someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults.

And nearly half (43%) of college women report experiencing violent and abusive dating behaviors.



Real talk

We asked youth from across the country what they would tell the adults in their lives about dating abuse if they could.

“Acknowledge that it’s a problem.” • NAVYA, AGE 16

“I would appreciate if adults would take concerns more seriously when I brought a question to them about a relationship. Sometimes adults in my life have discounted what is occurring in my relationship because of my age.” • KATE, AGE 19

“I wish adults in my life would stand up for me in preventing dating abuse.” • ALANA, AGE 17

“You cannot intimidate your child into leaving their abusive relationship with the same tactics the abusive partner is using.” • SOPHIE, AGE 20

“I wish adults would talk about events that arise in relationships, like sex.” • KIKI, AGE 18

“I wish adults would go through more of the warning signs of a toxic relationship because I feel we as teens choose to overlook or ignore red flags.” • JADA, AGE 16

“I wish the adults in my life would actually mean it when they say it’s okay to be single. I wish they allowed me greater self-determination and room to not have certain relationships.” • ALYSSEA, AGE 18

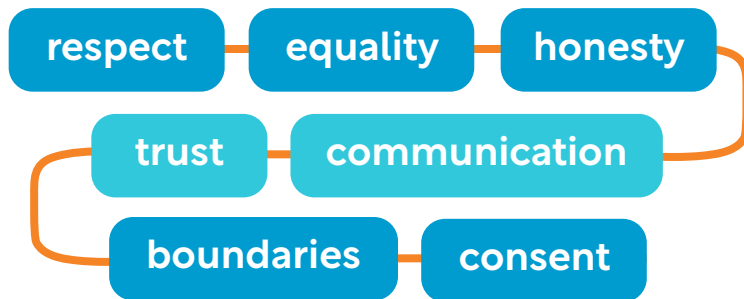
“To avoid coming off as invalidating the young person’s feelings, listen to their thoughts first. Try to understand their perspective before you try to change their behavior.” • LILLY, AGE 22

Healthy relationships & red flags



Learn what's essential in a healthy relationship

While no two relationships look the same and different people may define relationships in different ways, there are a few key things that must be present in all relationships for it to be healthy:



Is your relationship healthy?

Check out the [Relationship Spectrum](#).

Learn the warning signs of abuse

Relationships exist on a spectrum and it can sometimes be hard to tell when a behavior goes from healthy to unhealthy or even abusive. Typical warnings signs include:

- Checking your phone, email, or social media accounts without your permission.
- Putting you down frequently, especially in front of others.
- Isolating you from friends or family (physically, financially, or emotionally).
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity.
- Explosive outbursts, temper, or mood swings.
- Any form of physical harm.
- Possessiveness or controlling behavior.
- Pressuring you or forcing you to have sex.

Take action

youth

Have a courageous conversation

Whether on campus, online, at home, at work or hanging out, if you see something concerning or notice changes in someone close to you (like they are no longer posting, absent from class or not texting their friends anymore) — ask questions. Let them know you are a safe space to share their experience without any judgment. It's okay to ease into it — try asking, *“Hey, I’ve noticed you’ve not been on social media or texting as much, is everything okay?”*

Practice self care

Self-care is incredibly important for all our individual health, but not everyone knows what is or how to start. One first step to take is to start a [self-care checklist!](#) You can customize your own self-care plan to fit your own needs and personality.

Use your platforms & influence

Every day is a good day to spread awareness about teen dating violence, but during TDVAM, it's especially important to add your voice. Follow love is respect and like, comment, and share our content. Share your own thoughts using [#TalkAboutIt](#) and [#TDVAM2022](#) Let your network know that you are participating in TDVAM and invite them to do the same.



@loveisrespectpage



@loveisrespect



@loveisrespectofficial

adults

Support the youth in your life

As teens and young adults learn how to navigate relationships, parents and influencers (ex. teachers, coaches, and aunts and uncles) — people like you — play a pivotal role in modeling healthy relationship behavior. **Youth crave our connection and support.**

Have you considered having a discussion with a young person in your life about healthy relationships? This can be effective in helping them identify the healthy behaviors they should look for in a partner, and how to recognize unhealthy behaviors.

love is respect and The Allstate Foundation teamed up to create an amazing resource for the influential adults in the lives of youth, **[download your copy of the parent discussion guide today!](#)**



Your community

LGBTQ+ specific support

- **LGBT National Help Center:** serving the LGBTQ+ Community by providing free and confidential peer support and local resources. Call 1-800-246-7743 or chat at glbthotline.org.
- **Brown Boi Project:** a community of people working across race and gender to eradicate sexism, homophobia and transphobia and create healthy framework of masculinity and change. brownboiproject.org
- **Scarleteen:** inclusive, comprehensive, supportive reproductive and relationships info for teens. scarleteen.com
- **The Trevor Project:** provides 24/7 confidential crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ young people under 25. Call 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678678 or chat live at thetrevorproject.org

Black, Indigenous & communities of color specific support

- **Heart:** ensures that Muslims have the resources, language, and choice to nurture sexual health and confront sexual violence. hearttogrow.org
- **StrongHearts:** 24/7 free, confidential, and culturally-relevant support for Native American and Alaska Native teens and young adults experiencing dating abuse and sexual violence. Call 844-7NATIVE (762-8483) or chat live at strongheartshelpline.org.



love is respect is here for you

Mission

love is respect is an initiative that engages, educates, and empowers young people to prevent and end abusive relationships. love is respect was established in 2007 by the National Domestic Violence Hotline in response to a national discourse about the need for prevention services, especially among teens.

love is respect is a safe, inclusive space where teens and young adults can access information and get support in an environment designed specifically for them.

Learn more

All of our resources, including live-advocate support, are free, confidential and 24/7/365.



1.866.331.9474



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