

Plainwell High School TDV Committee 2013-14 School Year Framework for Action

FACTORS IN DATING ABUSE

All genders can be perpetrators or victims of abuse.

- Dating violence occurs in all neighborhoods, income levels, and ethnic groups -equal opportunity violence.
- Dating violence happens in straight and same-sex relationship.
- Most abuse gets more severe over time.
- Abuse against females tends to be more severe and injurious.
- Exposure to DV can affect a student's school success and attendance.
- In the secondary school setting, student behaviors dealt with by staff can often be related to dating relationship situations.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

- 1 in 3 teens experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships.
- 1 in 10 teens experience physical abuse in dating relationships.
- Nearly 80% of young women who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser.
- 1 in 4 teens in a relationship say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cell phones & texting.
- Only 33% of students report abuse to anyone else.
- When females are asked if they would tell anyone if they were abused, 86% said they would only tell a friend/peer.
- Girls between the ages of 16-24 experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence for any age group of females over a lifetime.
- Patterns of dating violence behavior, both victim/target and abuser, often start early and carry into adult relationships.

•

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SCHOOLS

- Over 80% of school counselors report not having a protocol in schools to respond to incidents of abuse. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/130/2/202.full.pdf>
- Over 90% reported that no training has been provided to teachers or staff
- Over 80% reported that their schools did not conduct periodic surveys around dating abuse behaviors.

A West Michigan example of what type of survey can be used to help schools

https://www.miottawa.org/Health/OCHD/pdf/data/OCYAS_2011.pdf

PROMISING TRENDS IN SCHOOLS

- More peer-led advocacy based learning with active student participation
- Youth-led advocacy or awareness-raising projects, such as pledge days or service projects. Example:

Marshall HS No More PSA video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=rSpoB4kJN9w&app=desktop/>

- Policy improvement or adopting new policies at school and district levels
- Parental involvement in prevention and awareness (81% of parents don't feel DV is a major issue in their school).
- Lecture-style prevention programs can be limited in effect

ELEMENTS OF SCHOOL SUCCESS IN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION Patterns and Challenges

1) PREVENTION PROGRAMS - curriculum-based

Developmentally appropriate middle and high school programs

Saturate the schools across grade levels

Can work into existing health education or relationship building work

Use or adapt evidence-based programs

Logistical challenges: time, scheduling, community perceptions

Article: The Need for School-Based Teen Dating Violence Prevention

<http://digitalcommons.library.tmc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1136&context=childrenatrisk>

2) STAFF EDUCATION

Invested staff can change school climate

Link dating abuse to academic success and school safety

Must be prepared for disclosures of abuse - protocol for action with training

Provide simple resources for them to keep on hand - identify local resources for them

Address concerns of mandatory reporting and confidentiality - MI requirements

Understand state and local DV laws - Minors and consent process

Logistical challenges: staff time, administrative commitment, clarity of policy

requirements both district and community

Manual: Building Safe Schools - A Guide to Addressing Teen Dating Violence:
A Resource Manual for School Employees

<https://www.breakthecycle.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Building-Safe-Schools-A-Resource-Guide-for-School-Employees.pdf>

3) SCHOOL POLICY

Opportunity for awareness-building and public education - board level possibility

Policies need to be enforceable and provide consistency and efficiency of response for each incident encountered

institute procedures to limit re-traumatizing youth who report incidents of DV

Policy change process can mobilize communities and legislators on your behalf

Logistical challenges: political environment, time and patience, lack of invested stakeholders, existing related policies (ie. Already have bullying policy, why need more?)

EXAMPLES

Article: Adolescent Dating Violence: How Should Schools Respond?

<http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1043&context=jiae>

NEOLA Board policy example: 5517.03 Dating Violence and Abuse
<http://www.neola.com/pasco-fl/search/policies/po5517.03.htm>

4) INVOLVED PARENTS

Listen to how parents understand and talk about dating abuse in their community
Understand cultural and community needs, as well as where and when parents gather
Address parental concerns
Include them in relationship building as powerful stakeholders
Logistical challenges: free time, investment in the issue, personal vs. community understanding of dating abuse

5) YOUTH ACTIVISM

Engage youth to directly lead social change - Gives value to their ideas
Create leaders and activists while also teaching about healthy relationships
Youth more likely to listen to peers than adults
Mentorship and service-learning can reinforce prevention lessons
Logistical challenges: student time and supervision, sustainability with student turnover

RESULT

What an Action Plan based on the Framework above looked like for our committee:

IDEAS FOR EACH ELEMENT FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Consider for use in HS Health Class curriculum

- New Love Is Not Abuse (LINA) High School Curriculum -
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1_ITf48vsiWaUtJcTN2b1NIVXc/edit
- START TALKING Curriculum/Institute/Toolkits @ loveisrespect.org
- State of Michigan DV Toolkit for Schools - Available at:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-PUB-0224_172099_7.pdf

STAFF EDUCATION

Provide staff training and information from an attorney on minors, DV and the law.
Local police visit school to discuss patterns of DV in community with specific staff.
-Plan decided on was to present short, frequent trainings during monthly staff meetings

SCHOOL POLICY

Survey students about dating violence and their experiences with it. Find valid and reliable tools.

Action taken:

-Survey was constructed by Center For Women in Transition Prevention Coordinator and administered to sophomores. Results discussed at subsequent team meeting
<http://cwitmi.org/community-outreach/k-12-schools/>

-Dating abuse section and language added to High School Student Handbook

INVOLVED PARENTS

Parent Club involvement

Community input

Action taken: It's Time To Talk Day event held for parents in February 4, 2014
<http://www.itstimetotalkday.org>

YOUTH ACTIVISM

Students included on committee

Start training students as advocates in MS, experienced by HS years

Recruit college age student advocates to mentor PHS student advocates

National Teen DV month in Feb. 2014

Action taken by PHS PALS group led by school counselor:
PHS PALS #Orange4Love Day during Respect Week February 2015
<http://www.plainwellschools.org/true-pals/>