



CHCHD News

Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department

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Break the cycle of violence; February is Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness Month

Chattanooga, TN- One in three US teens experiences some form of dating abuse, according to Break the Cycle, a national non-profit organization that educates teens on dating violence. As part of its Rape Prevention Program, the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department is educating teens and the community as a whole about the prevalence of domestic violence and how it can be prevented.

Teen Dating Violence is not just physical, it can include verbal, emotional, and sexual abuse. Abuse is wrong no matter how often it occurs within a relationship, whether it occurs occasionally, or every day. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 9.8 percent of high school students reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

To help prevent dating violence, parents should openly talk to their teen about the issue and demonstrate healthy relationship behavior.

“In addition to strong parental involvement, it also takes educational and after-school programs along with the faith based community to teach teens about what constitutes a healthy relationship. Our school presentations focus on several teen violence prevention topics including bullying, internet and dating safety, and rape prevention,” said Holly Quist, Public Health Educator for the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department.

Possible signs of teen dating violence include:

Does Your Partner?

- Say things to “put you down”
- Slap, push, or hit you
- Threaten you
- Use your cell phone to harass, stalk, or track you down
- Isolate you from your friends and family
- Insist you do not go places without him/her

Date Safety Tips:

- Take your own car
- Meet in a public place
- Tell a parent or friend where you are going
- Do not go on blind dates alone
- Do not share or exchange drinks
- Do not leave your drink unattended

For more information on Teen Dating Violence visit www.cdc.gov or www.tnblue.org.

The Rape Prevention Program of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department focuses on reducing the number of rapes and educating the community on how to prevent rape from happening. The program is also able to provide resources for contacts, educational materials, and programs on personal safety and bullying prevention. For additional information, please call (423) 209-8282

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