

# Happy Valentine's Day



## Love

### National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

The mere mention of February brings to mind images of cupids, conversation hearts, and cuddly stuffed animals - all symbols of love and romance. There's a dark side to dating, though. *In fact, 40 percent of girls age 14 to 17 say they know someone who's been hit or beaten by the person they're seeing.* As parents or caregivers of teens, it's important to be able to recognize warning signs that your teen may be involved in an unhealthy relationship. Some of the following may be just part of being a teenager. But, when these changes happen suddenly or without explanation, there is cause for concern.



- Failing grades, dropping out of school or school activities
- Difficulty making decisions
- Changes in personality, becoming anxious or depressed
- Acting out or being secretive
- Avoiding eye contact
- Having "crying jags" or getting "hysterical"
- Constantly thinking about dating partner
- Bruises, scratches, or other injuries
- Sudden changes in clothes or make-up
- Avoiding friends or changing peer groups
- Giving up activities, interests, or family time that previously had been important
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits

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- Using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Signs a partner may be abusive:

- Wanting to get serious quickly and refusing to take NO for an answer
- Acting jealous and possessive and wanting to pick partner's friends and activities
- Being controlling and bossy and making all the decisions and always checking up on partner
- Using threats and "put-downs"
- Using guilt trips and blaming the victim for what's wrong
- Apologizing or giving excuses for violent behavior like, "I promise I'll never do it again," or "I was drinking."

If you think your teen already may be involved with an abusive partner:

- Give your teen a chance to talk. Listen quietly to the whole story.
- Tell your teen that you are there to help, not to judge.
- If your teen does not want to talk with you, help find another trusted person for your teen to talk with.
- Focus on your teen's safety and self-esteem. Point out how unhappy your teen seems to be while with this person and the possibility of danger or harm. Do not "put down" the abusive partner.
- Let your teen know that abuse always gets worse. What may start as minor verbal or physical abuse is very likely to get worse if not stopped immediately.

If your teen tries to break up with an abusive partner:

- Advise that the breakup be definite and final.
- Develop a safety plan with your teen ahead of time.
- Support your teen's decision and be ready to help.
- Make sure your teen takes all necessary safety measures.

What you can say:

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[Visit HOHRC website](#)



*Support and healing for  
victims of crime and abuse*

- "I care about what happens to you. I love you and I want to help."
- "If you feel afraid, it may be abuse. Sometimes people act in ways that are scary and make you feel threatened, even without using physical violence. Pay attention to what you are feeling."
- "No one has the right to hit you. No one has the right to control you or what you do."
- "The abuse is not your fault. You are not to blame, no matter how guilty \_\_\_\_\_ is trying to make you feel. This should not be happening to you."
- "It is \_\_\_\_\_ who has a problem, not you. It is not your responsibility to help \_\_\_\_\_ change."

## Safe Housing

Imagine having to flee from your abusive home with no place to go. AT HOHRC, we have a place for victims to go. Our agency has developed a Safe Home Network in Morrison and Todd Counties that provides emergency short term housing for men, women and children who are forced to leave their home due to violence. The emergency safe home program has been in existence since 1995 and is continuing to expand in Morrison and Todd counties.



Emergency safe home providers are being sought to shelter domestic violence victims forced to leave their home for safety reasons.

Safe home providers will be asked to provide emergency short-term (less than one week) housing for families with immediate safety needs and will be provided with training to work as a provider.

If you are interested in becoming an emergency safe home provider or would like more information, please contact Deanna at 632-1657.

## Contact Us:

Morrison County Office  
 PO Box 67  
 Little Falls, MN 56345  
 Phone 320-632-1657  
 Fax 320-632-5457  
 24 Hour Hotline  
 320-632-4878  
 Or 1-888-454-4878

Todd County Office  
 PO Box 171  
 Long Prairie, MN 56347  
 Phone 320-732-2319  
 Fax 320-732-2056  
 24 Hour Hotline 1-800-682-4547

**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**



**"TEE OFF TO STOP VIOLENCE"  
15TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT  
MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2012**

The Hands of Hope Resource Center invites area golfers to participate in the Hands of Hope Resource Center's 15th Annual Charitable Golf Tournament on Monday, June 18, 2012 at the Long Prairie Country Club. All proceeds will assist victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and general crime.

If you would like more information or would like to volunteer your time and services to assist with the golf tournament, contact Kristi at [kristi.handsofhope@co.todd.mn.us](mailto:kristi.handsofhope@co.todd.mn.us) (320) 632-1657.

Everyone is welcome. Please save the date!