



## **Media Advisory:**

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## **High School Student's On-Campus Murder Highlights Need for Teen Dating Violence Prevention**

Sacramento, October 3, 2011—On Friday, 17-year-old Cindi Santana was stabbed to death in a courtyard at her LA-area high school; her 18-year-old ex-boyfriend Abraham Lopez is scheduled to be arraigned on murder charges today. Lopez and Santana had dated on and off for years, and three days before the murder, Lopez had been released on bail after an arrest for making criminal threats against Santana.

Despite the fact that the couple seem clearly to have been in a troubled and abusive relationship, media coverage of the case has focused on the need for stricter security at schools, rather than on schools' role in helping prevent teen relationship violence.

According to the US Department of Justice, young women age 16-24 are more likely to experience intimate partner violence than any other age group—at a rate almost triple the national average. Statistics also show that many incidents of dating violence and harassment take place on school campuses.

Tara Shabazz, executive director of the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (the Partnership), said that parents and teachers must step up and acknowledge the seriousness of relationship violence in young people.

“Schools have an educational role to play in keeping their students safe,” she said. “It’s not enough just to police campuses for weapons. We need to foster school environments that support healthy relationships and condemn violence. Teen relationship violence is a real threat to young people’s lives and well-being.”

### **About the Partnership**

The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence is California's statewide domestic violence coalition, with nearly 200 member organizations and individuals. Working at the local, state and national levels for nearly 30 years, the California Partnership has a long track record of successfully passing over 100 pieces of legislation on behalf of domestic violence victims and their children. As the unified voice for California's domestic violence agencies, CPEDV provides statewide leadership on public policy issues, offers professional training and services to domestic violence service providers and promotes public awareness through community outreach efforts. With offices in Sacramento, CPEDV's member programs span the entire state.

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