



## Mobilizing Schools to Address Adolescent Dating Abuse

The Partnership worked closely with the California School Boards Association (CSBA) to jointly prepare a [policy brief](#) to frame the issue of schools' role in preventing adolescent dating abuse and promoting healthy relationships. We encourage you to use this publication to get the conversation started with educators in your community. This brief highlights the extent of the issue, how schools are affected and the steps schools can take to address adolescent dating abuse. Offer your expertise and organization resources to provide education, support and technical assistances to schools in the implementation of policies on adolescent dating abuse and prevention curriculum.

### Engaging the School Board:

- Attend a local school board meeting: Learn about the current issues facing the school.
- Request time in the agenda to present information from the policy brief. Highlight how the issue affects schools and what schools can do to address adolescent dating abuse.
- Give copies of the [CBSA policy brief](#) to members of the school board.
- Pose questions from the policy brief to the board:
  - What policy direction can the board provide to ensure that middle schools and high schools engage in age- and developmentally-appropriate efforts to support safe and respectful relationships?
  - What curriculum is currently in place related to dating abuse, and in what courses and grade levels? Should student education on dating abuse be expanded to other courses or grade levels?
  - How will the governance team ensure that there is a response to all forms of abuse, harassment and bullying that addresses both the commonalities and distinctions in such behaviors depending on the nature of the relationships between the students?
  - Is professional development needed to ensure that teachers and staff know how to detect signs of potential dating abuse and respond and refer appropriately?

- Use the CDC and Prevention Institute publication, *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence* to educate School Board members on the intersections of violence.

[http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/connecting\\_dots.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/connecting_dots.html)

### **Engaging the Principal:**

- Request a meeting with the principal to discuss adolescent dating abuse.
- Be sure to leave the principal with the policy brief and information about your organization.
- Offer to provide training on adolescent dating abuse to teachers and school personnel.
- Provide the principal with information on school based curriculum that promote healthy relationships.  
[http://www.vawnet.org/assoc\\_files\\_vawnet/odvn\\_teendatingviolencecurriculumcomparison\\_april2010.pdf](http://www.vawnet.org/assoc_files_vawnet/odvn_teendatingviolencecurriculumcomparison_april2010.pdf)
- Ask about a school sponsored event during Teen DV Month or an assembly about adolescent dating abuse. Emphasis the importance of on-going conversations and promotion of healthy relationships.

### **Engaging teachers:**

- Educate teachers on adolescent dating abuse and how they can address it in their classrooms.
- Build relationships with teachers. Offer to provide presentations to classes about adolescent dating abuse.
- Encourage teachers to incorporate lessons about healthy and respectful relationship into their lesson plans.  
[http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/migrated/unmet/teendating/teacher\\_sguide.authcheckdam.pdf](http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/migrated/unmet/teendating/teacher_sguide.authcheckdam.pdf); <http://www.lessonsfromliterature.org/index.html>

### **Using the CSBA/ Partnership Policy Brief:**

- Attend a Parent Teacher Associate meeting and share the publication with the association.
- Include the links to the policy brief on your organization's website.

- Share the information with school social workers, counselors, nurses, coaches, and club advisors.
- Write a blog or newsletter about preventing adolescent dating abuse to highlight the policy brief.