

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



**GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**EDUCATION:
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTOCOL**

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**Prepared by the
Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence**

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTOCOL COMMITTEE

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INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is the physical and/or psychological abuse of one member of a family by another. This abuse can be a crime. Domestic Violence is a serious problem of major proportions facing our society today. Only recently, however, have we come to more fully recognize the devastating impact that domestic violence has on children who are not direct targets of abuse, but instead witness one parent abuse the other.

Violence in the family affects all religious, economic, racial and cultural groups and has serious consequences for safety and security in the streets and in the schools. Statistics show that more than one household in six has been the scene of a person striking his or her spouse and that there is regular and repeated violence between spouses in 10 to 20 percent of all marriages. Since 1991, over one third of all homicide victims in New Hampshire were murdered by members of their families. It is clear that domestic violence affects all of us, either directly as we suffer its consequences in our homes or indirectly as a result of the enormous social and legal problems it creates.

This protocol provides information on spouse abuse and its effects on children, suggests ways for school personnel to educate students about the problem and offers guidelines for school personnel on how to handle domestic violence related problems.

OVERVIEW OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is the umbrella term used to describe physically or mentally abusive behavior between family members. Family members, for the purposes of defining domestic violence, are those persons who reside together or are involved in an intimate relationship. Domestic violence can occur between adults, siblings, adult to child, or child to adult. Domestic violence is also a term that applies to abusive behavior between persons who are dating. Abuse runs along a continuum of behavior and can range all the way from verbal harassment to murder. This protocol focuses on the effect that spouse or partner abuse has on children who witness the abuse. The term "spouse" is used here to mean one partner in an intimate relationship, whether married or not, as well as any two adults who have had children together.

Domestic violence is the physical, psychological or other manipulative behavior by one family member or household member (perpetrator) that controls or harms another (victim). It is the willful infliction of physical pain, injury and/or mental anguish. Physical and emotional abuse are the basic forms of domestic violence. It is a problem which usually escalates over time in both severity and frequency. Without some kind of help or intervention, the violence usually gets worse. The end result can be death, either at the hands of the perpetrator or through suicide. Domestic violence threatens the well-being of all family members.

Physical abuse includes a range of behaviors characterized by the use of physical force. Frequently, the behavior results in serious bodily harm. Physical violence ranges in severity from a slap to homicide, and, by its nature of intimidation, is coupled with emotional abuse. It includes pushing, punching, slapping, kicking, biting, hitting, shoving, choking, burning, destruction of the victim's property, rape and sexual assault. It can include the use of a gun, knife or other weapon, and the use of restraints, imprisonment and kidnapping.

Emotional abuse is behavior that serves to intimidate, shame, humiliate, ridicule, or denigrate another family member. It is excessively controlling and/or manipulative. It can occur as a part of physical violence or independently. Emotional abuse can be more detrimental to the victim's self-esteem than physical abuse. Emotional abuse can include, but is not limited to, the occurrence of one or more of the following behaviors:

- harassment;
- threat of physical violence;
- the withholding of affection, privileges, rights;
- giving (or issuing) ultimatums;
- scapegoating and blaming for problems;
- name calling, criticizing, ignoring, yelling;
- lewd conduct.

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The State of New Hampshire has recognized the seriousness of domestic violence and is making progress toward providing effective relief and protection for those who suffer from it.

There is a special law in New Hampshire, RSA 173-B, (see Appendix) designed to protect any adult against domestic violence. Temporary restraining orders are available, free of charge, at any district or superior court in the state. These protective orders direct the abusive person not to abuse the victim and not to enter the victim's residence, place of employment or school. Orders may also grant temporary custody of children. Final, permanent orders, effective for up to one year, can be granted after a court hearing at which the abuser may present his or her case. Violation of any restraining order is a crime. Further information about New Hampshire's domestic violence law is included in the appendix.

Safety is one of the most pressing needs of victims of domestic violence. In 1977, New Hampshire began to respond to this need by developing a system of programs for battered women and their children. Currently, there are 13 local, domestic violence programs around the state that provide direct services to victims of domestic violence. Services available include 24-hour crisis lines, emergency shelter, support groups, advocacy and peer counseling and support. The programs are all members of the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, which serves as a statewide coordinating agency and clearinghouse for information on the issue of domestic violence. The local direct service programs, with contact names and numbers, are listed in the Appendix.

In addition to the local service programs, there are domestic violence coordinating councils organized around each district court jurisdiction in the state. These coordinating councils are comprised of court personnel, victim advocates, police, batterer intervention programs, educators, and business leaders who meet on a regular basis to identify and address community needs relative to domestic violence.

In October, 1993, Governor Stephen Merrill, created the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence. The Commission has four committees – Victim Services, Protocol, Public Education and Batterer Intervention – all of which are focused on the goal of creating more effective interventions in violent families, and reducing the incidence of domestic violence in New Hampshire. The Governor's Commission also provides a statewide focus to the various efforts in the state to create a zero tolerance for abuse in families, expand support and services for victims, and demand accountability for batterers.

WHY SHOULD MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM BE CONCERNED ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Children living in emotionally and physically abusive homes, even when they are not direct targets of abuse, are victims of the situation. As secondary victims, children must struggle and cope with a high level of stress that comes from the fear of injury, to their parents, other family members and to themselves, as well as the stress that comes from living with poor parental role models and associated family dysfunction. In addition, many children whose parents are battered often become victims of the abuse themselves. Current estimates indicate that between 45 percent and 70 percent of all spouse abuse cases eventually include child battering as well.

The failure to adequately address the problems that students experience as a result of domestic violence can lead to serious short-term consequences. As a result of being a secondary victim of domestic violence, children often fail to thrive intellectually and achieve academically. They are often the students who are highly disruptive, or overly withdrawn.

Educators, because of their role in the socialization of children, should also be aware of the potential for long-term consequences in failing to adequately address problems of domestic violence. Obviously, the individuals who are abused suffer. What is not so obvious, perhaps, are the problems that future families of secondary victims will experience as the pattern of violence is repeated. According to research, there is a strong and significant tendency for boys who witness parental spouse abuse to repeat the abusive pattern in their own intimate relationships as adults. Male children of couples in which there is wife abuse are statistically at high risk for developing into the next generation of abusive husbands. Eighty-two percent of the husbands in one study of abusive families who witnessed family violence and were also victims of child abuse eventually became perpetrators of violence in their own families. In addition, men who had witnessed family violence, but were not child victims, were also more likely to be violent. These results provide another strong reason for early intervention with children of a violent parent.

School systems, confronted with many serious social problems, are developing strategies to prevent and manage problems such as alcohol or other substance abuse, increased teenage pregnancy, AIDS, suicidal intent and other self-destructive and socially disruptive acts. Because domestic violence has detrimental effects on children, their families, and therefore on society in general, strategies must be developed to address this problem also. In fact, in many cases the aforementioned problems often stem from the trauma of being raised in a home where domestic violence exists.

WHAT BEHAVIORS DO THESE CHILDREN DISPLAY IN THE CLASSROOM?

Although observed classroom behaviors can rarely be causally linked to any one specific factor there is mounting evidence that certain behavior patterns are often exhibited by children living in violent and discordant families. Behaviors that are displayed by children from violent homes may be widely disparate. If these behaviors are apparent, domestic violence should be considered as a possible cause. They include:

- aggressive, acting out behavior;
- withdrawal;
- truancy and delinquency;
- poor peer relations;
- inappropriate interpersonal skills; and
- poor communication skills.

The age of children does influence their ability to deal with problems in the home. Educators are aware that students will be at different stages of development in the classroom. Educators are familiar with the parameters of normal behavior for the age of children with whom they deal. Domestic violence influences the behavioral development of children. The dynamics present in violent homes can impede the developmental process or can create an atmosphere where children assume attributes of maturity beyond their normal age-specific behavioral stage. Educators need to be sensitive to those children who display behaviors that fall outside the normal developmental stage for their age group.

Very frequently, the behavior these children display is indicative of unmanageable stress stemming from their home lives. Not all children react to stress in the same way. However, stress often does create problems in the classroom. Some children are able to cope with stressful events adequately, and their classroom functioning will not necessarily be affected. However, most children do have problems dealing with the type of stress created by living in an environment where spouse abuse occurs.

Stress in elementary school children is exhibited in a variety of ways. Some children become very active, while others become withdrawn or passive. Some act out by bullying other children and being disruptive in the classroom, while others withdraw and become quite isolated from peers as well as from the activities going on in the classroom.

Stress in older children is also expressed in a variety of ways. As children grow older and their thinking becomes more complex, feelings of isolation, loneliness, despair and insecurity tend to increase as their comprehension of the situation increases and they develop a greater awareness of their inability to have any control over home problems. The stress created by this type of situation is great. For some children, suicide becomes an alternative to an intolerable home life and associated stresses. Children with healthy coping mechanisms do not react to stress with thoughts of suicide; however, children in violent homes usually have not been provided with an environment where good coping skills are taught. Because suicide among young persons has increased so dramatically over the last two decades, special attention must be paid to children who send out certain warning signals that can be observed in the classroom, such as:

- persistent lack of motivation;
- constant lethargy or lack of energy;
- inability to concentrate;
- difficulty in making decisions; and
- substance abuse.

It should be remembered that secondary victims to domestic violence grow up in an atmosphere that often influences all areas of behavioral development and therefore exacerbates a child's vulnerability to many stressors.

ROLE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Public Education Committee of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence resolved to design and promote a number of education campaigns to the purposes of refocusing the public's attention to the issue of domestic violence, including its causes, effects and the means to stop the abuse. In September, 1995, the Commission released its first report to the Governor. The report articulated a series of recommendations including the suggestion that "Violence prevention courses should be instituted in public and private schools to begin breaking the cycle of violence. Guidelines should be developed for establishing effective school-based violence prevention program and/or enhancing current efforts in New Hampshire public schools K-12. Instruction should begin at an early age in order to build a foundation for acquiring decision-making and conflict resolution skills. This will enhance the safety of young children in violent

situations at home, teach alternatives to violence among teens, and begin the process of breaking the cycle of violence for future generations, which is predominantly a learned behavior. Programs should be integrated with existing curricula which address issues of student and community safety.”

The school is the one institution which has continuing and long-term contact with every child. As such, it may provide the first opportunity for recognizing the problems affecting students and is uniquely able to provide education aimed at preventing future violence, in and out of the home. Education programs geared specifically to the needs of each school and community can take many forms including the use of guest lecturers in classes; school-wide assemblies on violence; production and distribution of posters; and research projects on family violence as part of classroom work. Any education program about domestic violence should convey the message that violence is unacceptable and that there are alternatives to violence for resolving conflicts and dealing with anger and frustration. It is also valuable to demonstrate that domestic violence is not the fault of children and that it occurs in many homes. This helps to reduce the feelings of isolation, shame and secrecy.

To recognize and respond effectively to domestic violence as it affects students, all school personnel should be sensitive to clues that may be indicative of violence in the home. Some of the most common behavior and academic problems experienced by children may have their origins in family violence. Truancy, aggression or failure to complete assignments might signal the existence of this problem. Children in play situations, class discussions and peer relationships may exhibit signs of the stress, anxiety, aggressiveness and withdrawal which are often associated with violence in the home.

The student’s emotional reactions and behavioral problems can, however, be symptomatic of many different problems. While the presence of any single factor should not lead to the conclusion that there is family violence, it should alert you to the possibility that this may be an issue in the student’s home life.

Finally, remember that a student who tells school staff about violence should be believed. It is highly unlikely that a child would make up a story of physical or sexual abuse occurring in his or her home. School personnel should be prepared to respond by referring students to the appropriate person within the school.

Domestic violence is a sensitive and highly emotional subject. It is important to be aware of your feelings about family relationship and family violence. It is also important to remind yourself that some people still subscribe to myths about domestic violence and are unable to discuss the subject objectively. One of the most common myths is that wives who have been beaten must have provoked their husbands – that the beatings are justified by something the women have done or said.

In fact, provocation is often given as an excuse for the violence but is neither a moral nor a legal defense. Many abusers grew up in homes in which they witnessed violence between their parents and in which physical violence was seen as the ultimate and most effective method for displaying power, resolving conflicts and handling feelings of anger and frustration. They learned to batter and that they could do so with impunity. Unfortunately, many victims of abuse also fall prey to the victim-blaming myth and believe that they are responsible for the violence. These feelings of responsibility and guilt often contribute to the victim staying with the partner and suffering from continuing and escalating abuse.

As an educator you should be sensitive to the possibility that domestic violence may be affecting students. When working with victims of domestic violence you must keep in mind that their primary need is for safety and security. It is important that you, or your school, have information on local shelter programs and other battered women’s services to offer to victims and children. It is also important that they be given a sense of the options available to them and their ability to take control over their own lives. This can be done by providing information and referrals in a way which makes clear that it is the violence that is disapproved of, not the family or its members, and which offers non-judgmental concern and support.

The efforts of school personnel to help affected students and their families will be the first step in what may be a long and often frustrating process for all involved. Remember that each positive, supportive, response takes the victim one step closer to escaping the violence. Victims are often motivated to take steps when they believe their children are suffering and are more responsive to being helped.

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The Public Education Committee of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence recommends that schools develop procedural guidelines on how to handle domestic violence-related problems. Schools may use the following statewide guidelines for school districts as the basis for their local program.

- All school personnel are encouraged to become familiar with the domestic violence issue, duplicate this material and distribute it throughout the school and encourage school personnel to use the literature and film resources listed in the enclosed bibliographies.
- School personnel should remain alert and sensitive to students' behavior for signs of the effects of family violence.
- One individual from the school should be chosen to act as a resource on domestic violence. This person should be available to discuss individual student problems that may be related to family violence.

The responsibilities of this person may include the following:

- Compiling information on local direct service domestic violence programs and services;
- Contacting local service providers to develop channels of communication and cooperation between them and the school. Local service providers can offer assistance and information regarding identification of domestic violence as well as suggested responses and referrals for the student and his or her family.
- Posting throughout the school the phone number and other information about the toll-free statewide Domestic Violence Hotline. An adult or child can obtain information, counseling and referrals by calling the hotline. The number is
1-800-852-3388.
- Maintaining contact with students who have been identified as living with violence in their homes; and
- Promoting a preventive education campaign in the school. Local service providers and the State-wide Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence can serve as resources for the preventive education program.

If teachers and other school personnel become aware or suspect that a student is having problems in school which are related to violence in the home, the teacher should contact the person the school has designated to deal with this problem. This person, through the established contacts with local service providers, will ascertain the next step for helping students who have problems.

The following are suggestions for action which school personnel can take:

- The teacher and the principal, or the principal's designee, should talk with the student to determine if the problems the student is having in school may be related to violence in the home;
- The teacher and the principal should discuss what help may be appropriate for the student and/or the family. Factors to consider include the age of the child, the family circumstances of that child and the resources available in the school and the community. The school should also assess the potential danger to the child. The parent may be upset if he or she suspects that the child has told people outside the family about incidents of family violence;
- The student may be referred for assistance within the school in relation to his or her school-related problems;
- The student may be referred for assistance outside the school. However, this may pose a danger to the child. Outside referrals may ultimately require parental consent since most agencies will not provide services to a child without such consent. At all times the confidentiality of this matter should be maintained; and

- If a student openly shares the information about violence in his or her family, and is of appropriate age and maturity, then it may be advisable to provide such a student with information about local services which he or she can use independently. This could include information about the local service programs. Students should be told that they can call anonymously for counseling and referrals.

In concert with other helping agencies, education professionals can become an integral part of a multi-faceted effort to help students who suffer from violence in their homes. Further, the school can become the leader in an educational effort to prevent future violence.

PROVISIONS TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE WHERE A RESTRAINING ORDER EXISTS

Restraining orders, as described in the appendices, limit the access or contact between people. It is extremely important that schools take extra precautions to ensure that the access an adult has to his/her children is prohibited according to the restraining order issued. Schools, upon receiving notice that a parent is under a restraining order should immediately notify all school personnel that deal with the specific child(ren).

Because of the complicated dynamics, and sometimes faulty thinking and anger involved in cases of domestic violence, children are often targets of their parents' actions and reactions. Parents have been known to kidnap their children as a result of actions taken in domestic violence cases. Schools have, at times, unwittingly, allowed this to occur. For the same reasons, policies regarding the release of information are important. Sometimes the restraining order will deny access to a child's records. Schools should generally discourage handing over the records. This action will prevent, or severely hinder a parent's ability to abduct a child and enroll him/her elsewhere. Coordination with the courts to be notified when restraining orders are modified or dropped should also be encouraged.

WHEN A STUDENT HAS A RESTRAINING ORDER IN EFFECT

According to New Hampshire's domestic violence statute, minors can obtain restraining orders against partners, other than family members, without consent of or notification of parents. This represents some unique problems for schools. It is entirely possible, and in fact quite likely, that a student could get a restraining order against another student at the same school. As restraining orders can include provisions restraining the abuser from entering the workplace or school of the victim, this presents a challenge for schools. What if the victim and the abuser are in the same class, participate in the same extracurricular activities, or have the same lunch period? How will the school protect the student, without infringing on the educational rights of the abuser?

All schools with students of dating age should establish administrative protocols for protecting the safety of victims who have restraining orders against other students. In developing such protocols, schools should be aware of the stigmatization and ostracization that victims often experience, and develop procedures that provide safety and support for victims. By having such protocols in place schools will avoid confusion and possible revictimization of an abused student when cases of abuse between students arise.

SUMMARY

Domestic violence clearly creates problems for entire families, not just those being directly abused. Children who live in these homes manifest their problems with a wide range of behaviors. Because many situations may cause children to act out, withdraw, or behave in other dysfunctional and disruptive ways, efforts should be made to discover the precipitating problems, in order to better understand what the child is experiencing.

Professionals in the educational system should consider the following points:

- Children need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities in their own relationships and roles in society, as well as have an understanding that domestic violence harms everyone.
- The problems that families frequently experience as they struggle with violence usually do not stop without outside intervention and support for both parties involved. Stopping violence in the home often requires police intervention. In many cases, one person must leave the home. Except in child abuse cases, an educator must respect the rights of the individual to make choices about the actions they take connected to domestic violence. Therefore, any “helping” action taken on behalf of a child in regard to domestic violence must be done in such a way as to not put the family in jeopardy of escalating violence and abuse.
- Many victims do not know that help is available or how to access services. Educators should know the telephone numbers of referral sources.
- It is not the teacher’s role to provide long-term therapy or intervention services. Other school or outside professionals can appropriately counsel children being affected by violence in their homes. Within schools, staff should work together to develop methods to consistently help children cope with their unsettling home environment.
- Institutions, including schools, should not provide visitation or exchange services, without considering safety and liability issues. Should a school wish to develop visitation services, they should consult with the local Domestic Violence Coordinating Council through the District Court.

Educators at all levels should give increased attention to the many problems caused by domestic violence. Recognizing domestic violence as a precipitating problem for many children and working toward breaking the pattern can not only help children cope with their current situations, but it can also help prevent child abuse and help reduce the frequency of family violence in future generations.

APPENDIX A

**A SAFE PLACE INC.
Dating Violence Prevention Pilot Project**

SUMMARY OF THE DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION CURRICULUM

**Prepared By: Peggy Kieschnick and Kathleen Kennett
January 1996**

The Dating Violence Prevention Curriculum was developed by A Safe Place Inc. as a part of the Safe Place Dating Violence Prevention Pilot Project. A Safe Place is a women-founded and women-run organization, committed to the prevention and elimination of partner abuse. A Safe Place aims to foster the right to self-determination for a person who has been abused, and is guided by the principles of non-violence, inclusiveness, mutual respect and shared decision making. Addressing abuse is accomplished through providing shelter, support services and advocacy, educating communities in Rockingham and Strafford counties in New Hampshire about relationship violence and social structures and attitudes which perpetuate abuse.

The Dating Violence Prevention Curriculum was made possible through a generous grant from the Foundation For Seacoast Health in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

We hope you find this curriculum summary helpful! If you would like a complete copy of the curriculum or would like to know more about the Dating Violence Prevention Project, please contact us at:

A Safe Place Inc.
P.O. Box 674
Portsmouth, NH 03802
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The curriculum was written by Peggy Kieschnick and Kathleen Kennett.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Several years ago, researchers began to quietly report alarming rates of violence in teen dating relationships. Through our work in the community we, at A Safe Place, began to hear from teens who were experiencing physical, sexual and emotional abuse in their dating relationships, with some of the abuse taking place as early as in the eighth grade. Not surprisingly, the demand for prevention programs in high schools was also increasing. In 1989 A Safe Place made 26 presentations to a total of 469 high school students. By 1992 the number of presentations had doubled and through them A Safe Place was reaching over 1,200 high school students.

In response to this dramatic increase in requests for education as well as our on-going commitment to prevention, we began to look at ways in which we could both meet the needs of adolescents in crisis and prevent the abuse before it occurs. Out of these desires, we developed what was to become the Safe Place Dating Violence Prevention Pilot Project.

The Project was primarily funded by the Foundation For Seacoast Health, the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation and the Portsmouth Regional Hospital Women's Care Project. The project began in January of 1993. Work in the school was completed in June of 1994. The project's evaluation component was completed in the fall of 1994.

The goal of the project was to reduce and prevent abuse in teen dating relationships. Our hope was to do this by integrating dating violence prevention into the curriculum and culture of the school in such a way that it would continue for many years to come. Furthermore, through careful development, piloting and evaluation, the project was designed to create a model that could be replicated in other high schools throughout the state.

Specifically, the Project consisted of six major components: a **"media blitz"** within the school designed to reinforce the value of respect and the commitment to non-violence; work with existing **leaders** within the school community to enable them to continue the work of violence prevention on an on-going basis; the development of a **resource library** of materials on dating violence prevention; the implementation of a series of **"focus groups"** that used market research techniques to gain critical information from young men on their perception of the problem of teen relationship violence and their input in designing effective

interventions; the development and implementation of a dating violence prevention **core curriculum** for use in freshmen health classes; and, the implementation of a strong **evaluation** component to measure both the size of the problem and the effectiveness of the Project in impacting students' knowledge, attitudes and behavior regarding dating violence.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The curriculum developed through the project is unique in that it was designed with extensive input from a broad cross-section of students and their teachers. In the spring of 1993 we spent one day a week with two classes of freshmen for the entire semester "trying out" curriculum ideas. During and after each class students gave both verbal and written feedback on the materials presented and on the style of presentation. Based on this information, we then designed a seven-session curriculum module that we piloted with six health classes in the fall of 1993. Students and teachers again gave in-depth feedback which was used to make curriculum revisions. The revised work became a five-session curriculum which was taught to six new health classes in the spring of 1994. These students again responded to the curriculum and based on this data, a final curriculum was developed and was implemented on an on-going basis in the pilot school beginning in the fall of 1994. In addition, through the focus groups described above, we were able to elicit feedback from young men that we also incorporated directly into the curriculum.

The result, we hope, is a curriculum that not only "looks good on paper", but that also makes sense to students and is "user-friendly" for teachers.

CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The curriculum is divided into five units. Each unit can be completed in fifty minutes. The units can also be easily expanded into more than one class period for teachers who wish to treat a particular unit or the entire curriculum in more depth. The optional activities and background materials will be helpful in this process. If a teacher needs to complete the curriculum in fewer than five days, we recommend that s/he present a portion of each unit rather than omitting any one unit in its entirety. Each unit includes the following:

Overview Of The Unit (suggested activities, learning objectives, main points to make during the class, and the message of the day)

Background Information (a concise summary of the basic background information needed for the day's unit)

Description Of Activities (detailed description of each activity including the purpose, time requirement, introduction and instructions for the activity.)

Optional Activities (descriptions of optional exercises that may be used instead of or in addition to the activities described above - this allows teachers to adapt the curriculum to their particular interests and teaching style and to expand the curriculum to additional days as they see fit.)

Homework and Project Ideas (suggestions for daily homework and/or projects that will reinforce the concepts taught in class)

Handouts (a variety of handouts that may be used in or out of class to reinforce the students' learnings)

Additional Readings (a brief bibliography for each unit that teachers may use to access additional information on the unit)

CURRICULUM SUMMARY

In the attached pages you will find a brief outline of each of the five units including: The Sample Activities; Student Learning Objectives; Main Points To Make During The Class; and The Message Of The Day.

OVERVIEW

DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION CURRICULUM

- Unit One:** Relationship Expectations
- Unit Two:** Magic and Power
- Unit Three:** When Love Turns To Abuse
- Unit Four:** How To Help A Friend
- Unit Five:** Building Good Relationships

UNIT ONE: RELATIONSHIP EXPECTATIONS

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

“Real Man”/“Perfect Woman” Brainstorm	15 minutes
Perfect Date	20 minutes
What I Really Want	15 minutes

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify common stereotypes of masculinity and femininity.
- Students will understand that sex role stereotypes influence our expectations of ourselves and those we date.
- Students will begin to understand that sex role expectations influence our behavior.
- Students will understand the need to evaluate sex role stereotypes based on their own personal values and goals.
- Students will begin to identify the relationship qualities that they value most highly.
- Students will observe the similarities and differences between the qualities they value most highly in a relationship and the qualities emphasized in traditional sex role stereotypes.
- Students will discover the many similarities between what girls and boys most want in a relationship.

MAIN POINTS TO MAKE DURING THE CLASS

- Our culture communicates strong mores defining masculinity and femininity
- These mores are reinforced both consciously and unconsciously on a daily basis
- If we let them, these mores exert a strong influence not only on what we expect of ourselves but also on what we expect and how we behave in our relationships
- Many of the aspects of the “perfect man” or “perfect woman” are unattainable by the majority of people and leave many of us feeling we fall far short of who we should be
- Traditional sex role expectations severely limit our repertoire of acceptable responses in relationships
- Traditional sex role stereotypes encourage the development of relationships in which men must always be in control of the relationship and in which women are responsible for preserving the relationship at any cost

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

You have the right and the ability to make your own decisions about who you are as a man or woman and what you want from your relationships.

UNIT TWO: MAGIC AND POWER

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Falling In Love: Myths About Love and Romance	10 minutes
Coping With Conflict:	
What Proverbs Do You Live By?	20 minutes
Power: Pro's and Con's	20 minutes

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will begin to distinguish between “being attracted to someone,” and building a relationship
- Students will begin to understand the role of decision making in building a relationship
- Students will become more aware of what they have been taught about the appropriate way to respond to conflict.
- Each student will become aware of his/her expectations/assumptions about the use of power as a response to conflict in personal relationships
- Students will be able to identify the pro's and con's of using power in relationships

MAIN POINTS TO MAKE DURING CLASS

- There are many myths about “falling in love” and “living happily ever after”
- There is a difference between being attracted to someone and building a relationship
- The process of building a relationship involves many decision points
- Conflict is an inevitable part of any relationship
- A common response to conflict is to use power in an attempt to get your needs met
- Power is often effective in the short run, but usually results in serious losses to both persons and to the relationship

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Building a relationship that meets your needs is a process. It involves knowing what you want. It also involves working through a lot of conflict. One of the ways to respond to conflict is to use power. Power can get you what you want in the short term. But the price you pay in terms of your overall relationship is usually very high.

UNIT THREE: WHEN LOVE TURNS TO ABUSE

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Draw A Picture	10 minutes
Human Graph	10 minutes
Types of Abuse Brainstorm	10 minutes
Story of Abuse/ Cycle of Violence	15 minutes

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify myths and facts about victims and perpetrators of dating violence.
- Students will expand their definition of abuse to include not only physical, but also verbal, sexual and emotional abuse.
- Students will understand that the common denominator in all forms of abuse is CONTROL.
- Students will be able to identify the early warning signs of an abusive relationship.
- Students will be able to identify the cycle of violence including the “tension building”, “violence” and “honeymoon” stages of an abusive relationship.
- Students will begin to understand what factors make it difficult to leave an abusive relationship.

MAIN POINTS TO MAKE DURING CLASS

- Between 10 and 25% of high school students experience physical or sexual abuse in their dating relationships.
- Abuse can take many forms, but the underlying issue is control.
- Dating violence cuts across all socio-economic lines.
- One of the best ways to avoid an abusive relationship is to know the early warning signs - it is much easier and safer to leave an abusive relationship in its early stages than later when the abuse has escalated.
- Most abuse begins very gradually with “minor” verbal and emotional abuse which then builds over time.
- Typically abusive relationships follow a pattern of “tension building”, “violence” and a “honeymoon” period.
- The fact that the relationship is not violent all of the time is part of what makes it difficult to identify a relationship as abusive and to leave the relationship.
- Societal messages about the “magic” of love and the message that “I am nothing without you” convey the belief that what happens in our relationships is outside of our control and that even a bad relationship is better than no relationship.
- Once physical abuse has begun, it rarely ends unless the relationship ends.
- There are people in the school and in the community who are here to help.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

When one person in a relationship causes or threatens to cause physical or emotional harm or forces sex upon the other, the relationship is abusive. No one deserves to be abused.

UNIT FOUR: HOW TO HELP A FRIEND

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Stories of Abuse	15 minutes
Call It Like It Is (checklist sheet)	15 minutes
What Do I Say? (role plays)	20 minutes

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand that victims are not to blame for abuse; that only the abuser is responsible for abuse; and, only the abuser can change his/her behavior
- Students will understand that it is possible to leave an abusive relationship
- Students will be able to identify the key components of being a resource to a friend who is in an abusive relationship
- Students will know how to access community resources for dating violence prevention
- Students will know when a situation's potential lethality requires adult intervention
- Students will gain confidence in their ability to assist friends in abusive relationships

MAIN POINTS TO MAKE DURING CLASS

- Victims are not to blame for the abuse. Only the abuser is responsible for abuse and only the abuser can change his/her behavior
- It is possible to leave even a very abusive relationship.
- You have the ability to be a strong resource to your friends as they work to build safe relationships
- The key components of being a resource to a friend who is in an abusive relationship are:
 - be there
 - ACKNOWLEDGE the abuse
 - assess the danger
 - affirm friend's self-esteem
 - identify options and resources
 - emphasize that abuse is not her fault
 - respect her decision
- There are resources at school and in the community for teens in abusive relationships and for victims of sexual assault.
- If you are afraid that your friend's life is in danger, or that your friend is about to endanger someone else's life, you have an obligation to yourself and to your friend, to immediately notify a trusted adult of the situation.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

It is possible to safely leave an abusive relationship. You can play a powerful role in helping your friends build relationships based on mutual respect.

UNIT FIVE: BUILDING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Know What You Need	10 minutes
Personal Boundaries	15 minutes
The Berlin Wall	20 minutes

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify four core qualities of a good relationship.
- Students will begin to establish behavioral expectations for their relationships that reflect the four core qualities of a good relationship.
- Students will begin to identify ways in which they can impact societal norms that influence the development of positive healthy relationships.

MAIN POINTS TO MAKE DURING CLASS

- Good relationships “feel right” most of the time.
- Good relationships are based on clear expectations.
- In good relationships conflicts are resolved without the use of power.
- Good relationships are characterized by mutual respect.
- You, as individuals and as a group, can change the world.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

You have the right and the power, not only to avoid abusive relationships, but also to build relationships that meet your needs and help you feel good about yourself. You also have the power to make changes in your community.

