

RESOLUTION

Designating the month of February 2010 as ‘National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month’.

Whereas, dating, domestic, and sexual violence affect women regardless of their age, and teens and young women are especially vulnerable;

Whereas, approximately 1 in 3 adolescent girls in the United States is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting youth;

Whereas nationwide, 1 in 10 high school students (9.9 percent) has been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend;

Whereas, more than 1 in 4 teenagers have been in a relationship where a partner is verbally abusive;

Whereas, 20 percent of teen girls exposed to physical dating violence did not attend school because the teen girls felt unsafe either at school, or on the way to or from school, on 1 or more occasions in a 30-day period;

Whereas, violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications for victims by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide, and adult revictimization;

Whereas, being physically and sexually abused leaves teen girls up to 6 times more likely to become pregnant and more than 2 times as likely to report a sexually transmitted disease;

Whereas, nearly 3 in 4 children ages 11 to 14 (referred to in this preamble as ‘twins’), say that dating relationships usually begin at age 14 or younger and about 72 percent of eighth and ninth graders report ‘dating’;

Whereas, 1 in 5 twins say their friends are victims of dating violence and nearly 1/2 of twins who are in relationships know friends who are verbally abused;

Whereas, more than 3 times as many twins (20 percent) as parents of twins (6 percent) admit that parents know little or nothing about the dating relationships of twins;

Whereas, teen dating abuse most often takes place in the home of one of the partners;

Whereas, a majority of parents surveyed believe they have had a conversation with their teen about what it means to be in a healthy relationship, but the majority of teens surveyed said that they have not had a conversation about dating abuse with a parent in the past year;

Whereas, digital abuse and ‘sexting’ is becoming a new frontier for teen dating abuse;

Whereas, 1 in 4 teens in a relationship say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cellphones and texting;

Whereas, 3 in 10 young people have sent or received nude pictures of other young people on their cell or online, and 61 percent who have ‘sexted’ report being pressured to do so at least

once;

Whereas, targets of digital abuse are almost 3 times as likely to contemplate suicide as those who have not encountered such abuse (8 percent vs. 3 percent), and targets of digital abuse are nearly 3 times more likely to have considered dropping out of school;

Whereas, the severity of violence among intimate partners has been shown to be greater in cases where the pattern of violence has been established in adolescence;

Whereas, primary prevention programs are a key part of addressing teen dating violence and many successful community examples include education, community outreach, and social marketing campaigns that also understand the cultural appropriateness of programs;

Whereas, skilled assessment and intervention programs are also necessary for youth victims and abusers; and

Whereas, the establishment of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month will benefit schools, communities, and families regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or sex:

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Township Council of the Township of West Orange Joins the United States Senate in designating the month of February 2010, as “**National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month**”, supports communities to empower teens to develop healthier relationships and calls upon the people of the United States, including youth and parents, schools, law enforcement, State and Local officials, and interested groups to observe National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month with appropriate programs and activities that promote awareness and prevention of the crime of teen dating violence in their communities.

Karen J. Carnevale
Township Clerk

Honorable Susan McCartney
Council President

Adopted: February 9, 2010

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