

Guidelines for Parents of Teens

Reporting Dating Violence

Communicate

Ask Questions

- Do not overwhelm teen with lots of specific questions
- Explore teen's feelings about relationships/abuse • Explore causes of abuse

Educate – Teach teens about:

- Healthy versus unhealthy relationships • Relationship boundaries

Share your experiences

Provide perspective on the relationship relative to your life and your relationships.

Give advice

Talk about pros and cons of various options for how the teen can respond:

- Go to police • Work on making relationship healthier • Avoid situation • Limit contact
- Break-up (Assess eminence of and severity of danger)

***Note:** Teens want to hear your advice but not be told what to do about the relationship. Younger youth are more willing to hear parental advice than older youth.*

Protect Teen

Consider contacting police, abuser and/or the abuser's parents about help for abuser (if you can do so in a safe & appropriate manner).

Comfort & Support

Empathize with teen

- Express concern and understanding • Support teen's choices in handling the relationship
- Show affection

Don't Overreact

Express anger at the situation, not at the teen.

- Wait until you are calm to talk with teen • Don't get angry or yell • Don't go to extremes
- Stay calm

Counseling

Take teen experiencing dating violence to professional counseling.