



What does
it mean to
love well?



2025 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Toolkit

Learning to Love Well

It is never too early to start teaching teenagers how to love well. JBWS' Dating Abuse Prevention Program offers workshops to inform people about the fundamentals of healthy relationships and friendships starting in sixth grade. At first it begins with understanding the dynamics of healthy friendships and progresses as the students age.

What is TDVAM?

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM) is recognized every February and provides an opportunity to educate the community about the prevalence of dating abuse among teenagers and young adults.

Dating abuse is a pattern of coercive or controlling behavior where one person uses fear and intimidation to gain power over their partner. Anyone can experience dating abuse regardless of their race, ethnicity, income level, gender, sexuality, or education level.

How Can JBWS Help?

For nearly 50 years, JBWS has strived to help people experiencing abuse in their relationships and implement programming to stop abuse at its source. After recognizing a troubling pattern of abuse in teenagers and young adults in the 1980s, JBWS developed the Dating Abuse Prevention Program (DAPP).

DAPP promotes dating abuse prevention through awareness, education, engagement, and leadership opportunities. It also focuses on education about the warning signs of abuse and teaches how to recognize indicators of healthy relationships through workshops.

Get Involved:

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM) is a time to encourage our community to show their support for promoting healthy relationships. You don't need to have a teenager in your life to

Ways to Participate in TDVAM:

Invite JBWS for a lunch and learn: A member of JBWS' staff would love to come to your business, organization, or community group and speak about teen dating violence and how you can help.

Consume media meant for teenagers: Relationships that are depicted in movies, on TV, or in books, can typically feature unhealthy dynamics. Take the time to engage with this content so you can educate teenagers about problematic behavior.

Turn your life orange: The color of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is orange so show your support by infusing the color orange into all aspects of your life.

Avoid judgment: If a teen is in an unhealthy relationship, don't judge them. Foster an open, non-judgmental space for them to communicate with you about their relationship struggles.

participate in TDVAM. Below you will find numerous ways to get involved and help support our mission to end domestic violence.

Talk about healthy relationships: It's never too early to start talking to teenagers about what healthy friendships and relationships look like. Honesty, trust, and open communications are the hallmarks of a healthy relationship.

Share information about TDVAM: It takes all of us to stop teen dating abuse. Consider putting this toolkit on your company's intranet, placing a flyer in the bathroom, or sending out a company-wide email.

Check in on your teens: Do you have a teenager in your life? If so, take them out for a coffee or a nice dinner and talk to them about healthy relationships.

Follow JBWS' Dating Abuse Prevention Program (DAPP) on social media: Social media can be an incredibly powerful method for raising awareness about dating abuse. Consider following and sharing DAPP's posts on Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok. @DAPPofJBWS

Host a Gift Card Collection: Share the love this TDVAM by hosting a gift card collection for Amazon, Target, ShopRite, and Kohls.

Take the Luvwell Pledge:

To prevent dating abuse, we must commit to the principles of healthy, supportive relationships.

“I [name] take this pledge to prioritize healthy behaviors and wellness in all my relationships.”

L Learning About Each Other

We are forever changing and will respect each other’s growth and support each other throughout our relationship.

U Understand That We Are Our Own Person

Each of us came into this relationship as our own unique self with passions, goals, hobbies, interests, friends, and family. We will both prioritize those pieces of ourselves as they make us who we are.

V Values My Boundaries

My partner respects and honors my boundaries and I do the same for them. We have conversations about our boundaries and feel safe to discuss them with each other.

W Wellness Matters

Feeding my body, feeding my soul, feeding my brain, self-care, self-love, filling my cup, getting good sleep, and taking care of myself is part of taking care of my relationship.

E Emotionally Supportive

My partner can count on me to be emotionally supportive. Together, we will talk about what each of us needs from a partner and how we can help give that support to each other.

L Laughs With Me

We have fun together. We enjoy being together. It’s not always that serious, sometimes it’s just for fun.

L Let Go Freely

If at any time the relationship does not work for either of us anymore, I will let go respectfully, and freely. If I choose to end the relationship, I will communicate that openly to my partner. No matter where I stand on the break up, I will respect each other’s boundaries for everyone to feel safe.

Information for Parents/Guardians:

1 in 3 teenagers will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse from someone they're in a relationship with before becoming adults. **Unfortunately, 81% of parents think that teen dating abuse isn't an issue.** This is a problem because preventing dating abuse first requires us to acknowledge that it is an issue.

Having discussions about healthy relationships with the teenagers in your life is a great way to start helping them identify what is healthy and what isn't healthy. **Find the Parent's Discussion Guide on Youth Healthy Relationships here.**



Tips for Supporting Your Teen

The best way to help the teen in your life is through nonjudgmental support and unconditional love.

- ▶ **Listen attentively and provide support**
Avoid accusatory language and reassure your teen that the abuse isn't their fault. Give them the space to open up at their own pace.
- ▶ **Believe what they are saying**
Even if it's difficult for you to hear.
- ▶ **Show concern for them**
- ▶ **Don't overly criticize their partner**
Your teen may still love their partner, focus on the behaviors you observed and why they're harmful instead of the person.
- ▶ **Avoid giving ultimatums**
Resist the urge to punish or force your teen to make a decision. It may cause further isolation.
- ▶ **Get educated about dating abuse**
- ▶ **Decide on next steps together**

Information for Schools:

Educating students about dating abuse within the classroom is extremely important because teenagers spend a large portion of their time at school.

Ways to Participate in TDVAM:

Go Orange: Decorate the halls in the color orange, put up posters, encourage students, teachers, and administrators to wear orange throughout February in support of TDVAM.

Host a Last Drop Screening: for upperclassmen and/or parents. This involves a powerful 40-minute film that portrays an abusive relationship between two college students, followed by a 40-minute debrief and discussion about dynamics of abuse, warning signs, and strategies for getting help.

Social Media: can be a powerful tool in raising awareness about Teen Dating Violence. Consider posting about this issue on Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Instagram, and any other school social media platforms. When posting, consider using the hashtag #teenDVmonth so everyone can follow what is being done at your school.

Anonymous Q&A: Set up a safe, anonymous way for students to ask questions about dating violence answered by JBWS. Email DAPP@jbws.org for the QR code. All questions will be answered on Instagram.

Morning Announcements: can be a great way to remind your fellow students about Teen Dating Violence Awareness month!

Sample Morning Announcements:

- ▶ *Good Morning! Did you know that 1 in 3 teens will experience an incident of dating abuse while in high school? If you or someone you know is experiencing an abusive relationship please reach out to a guidance counselor (or insert names of counselors at your school), a trusted teacher or adult or, JBWS, the domestic violence prevention agency of Morris County.*
- ▶ *There's no excuse for abuse. 1 in 3 teens will experience dating abuse while in high school. Dating violence can affect anyone, regardless of race, religion, sex or economic status. Shine a light on this growing problem in our society. Know the signs and respect all accordingly. Remember, there's no excuse for abuse.*
- ▶ *February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. If you or someone you know is in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, seek out a counselor, teacher or an adult you trust. Because everyone deserves to be in a relationship where they feel happy, healthy and respected and where everything that is important to them is respected and valued.*

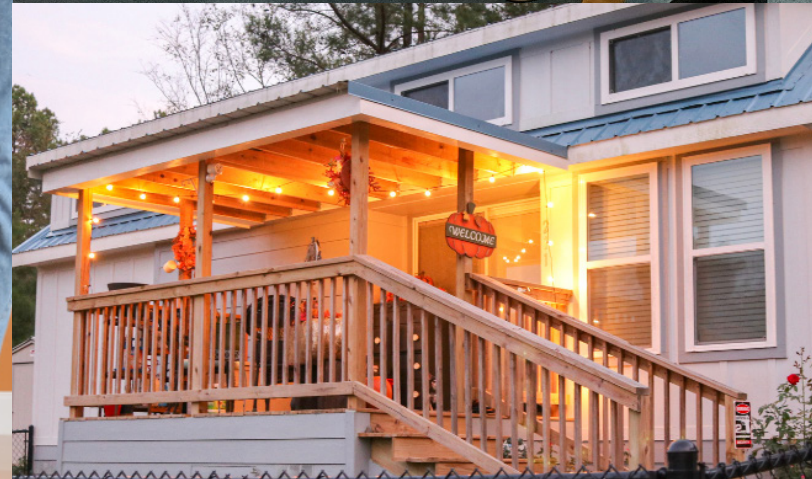
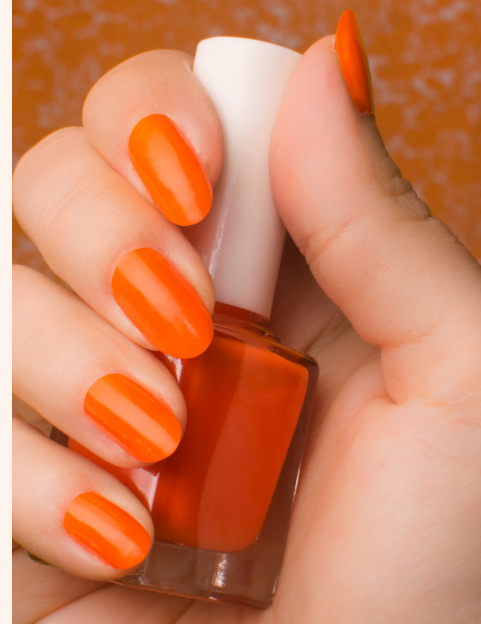
Wear Orange for TDVAM:

Tuesday, February 11 is wear orange day!

Consider adding the color orange into your wardrobe this day to show your support for healthy relationships! If you wear orange, please take photos and share them with us on social media by tagging **@DAPPofJBWS**.

Creative ways to represent orange

- ▶ *Put orange lights on your porch*
- ▶ *Encourage sports teams to wear orange accessories during games*
- ▶ *Paint your nails orange or dye a streak of your hair orange*
- ▶ *Use an orange background for virtual meetings*
- ▶ *Wear orange shirts, shoes, socks, or hats*
- ▶ *Use an orange notebook*



Resources:

If you are interested in learning more about dating abuse, then visit No2DatingAbuse.org/TDVAM. This page is filled with educational information, resources, and other supportive materials.

For more information about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month or our Dating Abuse Prevention Program please contact at DAPP@jbws.org or at **(973) 267-7520 ext. 136**.

