

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. Sequatchie County Coordinated School Health wants to inform you about what this is and how you can help.

Teen Dating Violence is part of the Domestic Violence problem we are experiencing here in the United States. Domestic Violence is violence in the form of physical, emotional/psychological, sexual and/or stalking. It is a type of violence that occurs among intimate partners or close relationships. Dating violence along with other violence can take place either in person or it can even happen electronically. Repeated texts, using social media, posting sexual pictures are all examples of electronic violence.

Dating violence is a widespread issue that can have short or long term effects on individuals, their family, friends and even the community. Dating violence is not reported often due to fear. As with all violence, can affect your health in a negative way. It can lead to anxiety, depression, drug or alcohol abuse. A drastic measure sometime even results in suicide.

What factors can increase the risk for dating violence and the effects of it are: belief that violence (dating or other) is acceptable, depression, anxiety and other trauma, having aggression towards peers and other aggressive behaviors, substance abuse, early sexual activity and multiple partners, and even witness or experience violence at home, school or in the community.

What can we do to prevent dating violence? Teaching preteens and teens about positive relationships will help. Being a good and positive role model of a healthy relationship to young people. Talk to your child about healthy relationships. Let teens know that it is ok to reach out to trusted adults if they find themselves in a situation that is violent. Be informed about domestic violence and dating violence.

Some resources that you can learn more about domestic and dating violence are:

www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datingmatters;

www.loveisrespect.org

www.ncadv.org

If you are worried about your teen, call loveisrespect hotline at 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 22522