

What you can do to help!

If you suspect that a friend or child is a victim of abuse, support the teen's courage and ask lots of questions to show you care.

In a gentle way, help the teen to recognize the excuses the abuser makes for his/her behavior. Help the teen find counseling through a domestic violence resource center.

If your friend or child won't listen to your suggestions, don't get angry or give up. The teen may need you. Call a resource center or the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office for advice.

Domestic Violence Resources

- Plymouth County District Attorney's Office
508-584-8120
- A New Day
508-588-8255
- South Shore Resource and Advocacy Center
508-746-2664
- Family and Community Resources
508-583-6498
- Police -Emergency
9-1-1



Assistance

Domestic Violence Awareness: Teen Dating

The Plymouth County District Attorney's Office

166 Main Street
Brockton, MA 02301

508-584-8120

www.plymouthda.com



TIMOTHY J. CRUZ
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A Message from the District Attorney:



As your District Attorney, I am committed to ensuring the safety and protection of every resident of Plymouth County.

When it comes to the issue of violence, we often assume that it comes from the hands of a stranger. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. Domestic Violence occurs in many homes, at the hands of the people we may know or love. A way in which we can keep our families safe, and combat this violence is by educating our communities and creating a greater awareness of Domestic Violence.

If you or someone you know is in a relationship that is abusive, I urge you to call for help. There is no excuse for Domestic Violence, we all have the right to live without fear.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Cruz
District Attorney

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Different Forms of Abuse

It is important to increase your awareness of the different forms of abuse and learn the warning signs that signal a relationship is both unhealthy and dangerous. Violence is often the outcome of a continued pattern of unacceptable behaviors. The forms of abuse include:

- **emotional** – not allowing you to make your own decision; not letting you see friends and family
- **sexual** – forcing you to do things that make you uncomfortable; suggesting you have sex with friends
- **verbal** – name calling; over-talking you; put downs; embarrassing remarks
- **physical** – threats; physical assault; getting “in your face”

Warning Signs

Some ways to determine if your relationship is going down the wrong track are:

- **jealousy** – Accuses you of playing up to other boys/girls; gets in fights with others he/she considers a threat
- **possessiveness** – Insists you cannot see friends; talk to other boys/girls; or go anywhere without him/her
- **controlling** – Tells you what to wear; how to speak & act; gets angry when you disagree
- **power** – Has a pattern of involvement with younger partners; pressures you sexually

Why Do Teens Stay in Abusive Relationships?

Many teens stay in an abusive relationship because they are involved in their first romantic and sometimes intimate relationship. A sense of importance, self worth and belonging is derived from being in a relationship.

Signs of Abuse

- Strange behavior on the part of the abused is common
- Unexplained bruises, cuts and other injuries are warning signs of dating violence
- Skipping school, abusing drugs and alcohol, or the withdrawal from friends and fun times because of fear of a boyfriend/girlfriend’s anger could also be indications
- Difficulty with making decisions or is afraid of her boyfriend/girlfriend
- If bruises on arms or legs appear and are noticed the victim may offer excuses or try to change the subject

Chapter 209A of Massachusetts General Laws, allows people in Dating Relationships to take out stop abuse, and stay away orders.



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