

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT POLICIES TO INCREASE STUDENT SAFETY AND IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

PROMOTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND PREVENTING TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Produced by Futures Without Violence®
National Program Office for
Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships
and Break the Cycle



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Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships (2008-12) remains the largest initiative ever funded to target 11 to 14 year-olds to promote healthy relationships as the way to prevent teen dating violence and abuse.

Start Strong was a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Blue Shield of California Foundation in collaboration with Futures Without Violence, formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and Blue Shield of California Foundation (BSCF) invested \$18 million in 11 communities across the country to identify and evaluate the most promising pathways to stop dating violence and abuse before it starts. RWJF funded ten sites around the country and BSCF funded one site in California. Communities included:

Start Strong Atlanta
Jane Fonda Center, Emory
University

Start Strong Austin
SafePlace

Start Strong Boston
Boston Public Health
Commission

Start Strong Bridgeport
Regional Youth Adult
Social Action Partnership

Start Strong Bronx
Bronx-Lebanon Hospital

Start Strong Idaho
Idaho Coalition Against
Sexual & Domestic
Violence

Start Strong Indianapolis
Indiana University Health

Start Strong Los Angeles
Peace Over Violence

Start Strong Oakland
Family Violence Law
Center

Start Strong Rhode Island
Sojourner House

Start Strong Wichita
Catholic Charities

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School and District Policies to Increase Student Safety and Improve School Climate and Appendix provide only general information for educational purposes about the prevention of teen dating violence. It does not constitute the practice of law, and should not replace or supplant legal representation. This product does not constitute legal advice and should not be used or relied upon as such. Legal advice is dependent upon the specific circumstances of each situation and upon the law in specific jurisdictions. Do not rely on legal information without consulting an attorney licensed to practice law in your jurisdiction.

These policies do not imply to prohibit expressive activity protected by the First Amendment of the United States of America Constitution. These policies should not be interpreted as to prevent a targeted or accused student from seeking redress under any other available law either civil or criminal. If a provision of this policy is or becomes illegal, invalid, or unenforceable in any jurisdiction, that shall not affect the validity or enforceability in that jurisdiction of any other provision of this policy.



INTRODUCTION

Teen dating violence affects 9 to 34 percent of U.S. teens, and many adolescents are involved in abusive relationships from as early as middle school.^{1,2,3} However, a recent study found that 81 percent of school counselors reported that they did not have a school protocol on how to respond to an incident of teen dating violence;⁴ moreover, 90 percent of counselors reported that in the past two years, training on how to assist targeted students had not been provided to personnel in their schools.⁵

These model policies were created to prevent teen dating violence and abuse before it starts, and were developed as models for school districts throughout the U.S. as part of the national *Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships Initiative (Start Strong)*. *Start Strong* utilized four core strategies including: 1) educating students in and out of school, 2) engaging important adults and older teens as youth influencers, 3) establishing school policies to reduce and prevent dating abuse and 4) using innovative media and social marketing to promote healthy relationships among youth ages 11-14.

These model policies aim to improve overall school climate, an approach commonly used by schools to improve relationships among students and to create a positive learning environment. It was written for middle schools, but is also relevant for high schools. Experts from domestic violence agencies, youth-focused organizations, schools, researchers, parents, legal experts and adolescent health care providers contributed to the development of these model policies.

This document includes an individual school policy followed by a comprehensive school district policy. These may be implemented independently or together, depending on the needs of your school or District. This policy can stand alone or be tailored to enhance existing policies and practices. Tools for assessing current policies and for increasing compliance with state and federal laws are included in the Appendix.

¹ Davis, Antoinette, MPH. 2008. Interpersonal and Physical Dating Violence among Teens. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus. Available at http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2008_focus_teen_dating_violence.pdf

² Tween and Teen Dating Violence and Abuse Study, Teenage Research Unlimited for Liz Claiborne Inc. and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline. February 2008. Available at http://loveisnotabuse.com/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=45693&folderId=72612&name=DLFE-203.pdf.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States, 2011 *MMWR* 2012;61(4):10.

⁴ Khubchandani, J. et al, 2012. Adolescent Dating Violence: A National Assessment of School Counselors' Perceptions and Practices," published in the August edition of *Pediatrics*. Available at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/07/03/peds.2011-3130.full.pdf>

⁵ Ibid.

This policy aims to increase a school and/or district's ability to:

- Engage school personnel, students, and parents in promoting healthy relationships;
- Integrate prevention with early intervention and response protocols;
- Provide support services to vulnerable students;
- Institute a reporting system; and
- Monitor policy effectiveness.

A school policy is an integral part of a comprehensive approach to building healthy adolescent relationships and preventing teen dating violence, however, it is not sufficient on its own. Programs and services are also needed to educate students, parents and school personnel and to meet the needs of students involved in abusive dating relationships. As described above, school policy is one of four recommended strategies for achieving a comprehensive dating abuse prevention program. More information on the *Start Strong* model, participating communities and related resources are available at StartStrong.FuturesWithoutViolence.org. An accompanying Policy Advocacy Toolkit was designed as a tool for those advocating for policy development in their schools and community.





INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL POLICY

TO INCREASE STUDENT SAFETY & IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE:
PROMOTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND PREVENTING TEEN DATING VIOLENCE^{6,7}

1. Teen Dating Violence⁸

<Name of School> will prevent and prohibit teen dating violence.

2. Definition of Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence is emotional abuse, electronic abuse, sexual abuse, and/or physical abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, and/or attempt to control another person in a relationship of a romantic or intimate nature or a romantic interest, regardless of whether that relationship is continuing or has concluded or the number of interactions between the individuals involved.

3. Scope

This policy covers conduct that takes place in school during school hours, before or after school while on school property, at school sponsored events, or while traveling on vehicles funded by the Department of Education and on other than school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or to endanger the health, safety, emotional and psychological well-being or welfare of the school community. This policy also governs electronic communication through telephone, cellular telephone, text-messaging device, personal data assistance device, email, instant messaging, blogs, websites, forums and mailing lists. This policy will be distributed annually to administrators and staff and will also be included in any student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, student handbooks and school websites.

⁶ This model policy is a product of *Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships*, a prevention initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Blue Shield of California Foundations focused on 11-to 14-year-olds. In addition to a focus on school policy, the other major components of the initiative are: 1) educating middle school students; 2) engaging parents to support their children's healthy relationships; 3) social marketing to address community and societal norms; and 4) involvement of high school students as champions of teen dating violence prevention and mentors for younger students.

⁷ Teen dating violence is defined as the use of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, or electronic abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a relationship of a romantic or intimate nature, regardless of whether that relationship is continuing or has concluded or the number of interactions between the individuals involved. The terms "adolescent relationship abuse" and "adolescent dating abuse" are also used by experts.

⁸ Another term that is getting some attention is Adolescent Relationship Abuse, to capture the younger pre-teens and eliminating the word 'dating' as not all youth may relate to this term.

4. Prevention Liaison

The school shall designate at least one person (“Prevention Liaison”) to coordinate policy development and dissemination at the campus level and to coordinate prevention activities including classroom curriculum, parent education, and student support groups. The Prevention Liaison is responsible for communicating with the District-level Prevention Coordinator or other designated school official.

5. Prevention Education and Youth Engagement for Students

School-wide, universal prevention education will be provided for students through the adoption of evidence-informed curriculum on healthy relationships and teen dating violence prevention and other methods. It will include the following topics: characteristics and skills of healthy relationships and how to promote them; definition of teen dating violence and early warning signs; links between bullying and teen dating violence; and responsible use of technology. School wide, integrated and multi-faceted primary prevention activities aimed at changing school culture will include youth-led awareness activities encouraging positive bystander behavior, as well as implementing early intervention with students by school staff.



6. Training for School Personnel

The Prevention Liaison will train all school personnel as part of ongoing professional development to promote healthy teen relationships, prevent teen dating violence, identify and address early warning signs and how to intervene and respond effectively to incidents, including being a positive role model and Upstander. If the Prevention Liaison does not have that expertise, a local dating violence prevention provider or public health organization may be contracted to provide ongoing professional development until internal expertise is developed. School personnel may include school administrators, teachers, school nurses and counselors, custodial staff, bus drivers, school resource officers and other school specialists.

7. Parent Engagement

Parents shall be offered opportunities and educated to expand their knowledge and skills relating to healthy teen dating by participating in workshops, small group discussions, open houses, newsletters and events. A “Transition Camp” for youth and families transitioning to middle school and to high school provides a key opportunity to address dating expectations and behavior.

8. Reporting and Responding to Suspected or Actual Incidents

All allegations of teen dating violence shall be reported by school personnel to the Prevention Liaison, Assistant Principal or Principal. The Prevention Liaison will be responsible for maintaining a reporting system, and educating school personnel on how to report incidents. A student complaint process will be instituted to allow students to file complaints about incidents or threats that may not have been witnessed or reported by others. The Prevention Liaison will document all reports and student complaints.

The Prevention Liaison will respond to incidents by:

- Implementing a protocol for responding to reports by students or staff, and formal written complaints;⁹
- Documenting incidents;
- Treating reports and complaints as confidential (limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation);
- Implementing investigation and response procedures and disciplinary procedures specific to these incidents, in accordance with the confidentiality limitations. This may include interviewing the targeted student, accused student and any witnesses, separately, within 24 hours of receiving the report; briefing the Principal and notifying parents of targeted student and accused students, unless such communication would jeopardize the safety of the student.
- Creating accommodations such as school-based stay away agreements to preserve safety of the targeted student;¹⁰
- Following procedures to implement protection orders;
- Referring targeted students and accused students to school and/or community resources for services such as counseling as appropriate and/or providing support groups in-house;
- Imposing appropriate sanctions and mandating intervention for student engaging in abusive behavior;
- Reporting the incident to the district (if mandated); and
- Following up to ensure that the case has been satisfactorily resolved.

9. Anonymous Complaints

When students do not feel comfortable talking to school personnel about these issues or when the incident involves a school employee, schools may consider allowing students to submit an anonymous complaint or may consider contacting law enforcement. Formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the submission of an anonymous form.

10. Provide Supports to Students

One-on-one counseling and /or support groups will be provided to targeted students and student engaging in abusive behavior/accused students. At no time should targeted youth and accused student be required to meet together or placed in the same support group.

⁹ See Section 9 for Anonymous Reports.

¹⁰ “Targeted Student” is a term being used instead of “victim” to describe the student who is experiencing abusive behavior as defined in this policy. The legal definition for a victim should follow state and federal law. See Appendix F for definitions.

11. Notice to Parents and Students

The school shall provide annual written notice to parents/caregivers and students of this policy in multiple languages and prominently display it in common areas and classrooms with contact information for the Prevention Liaison, counselors, hotline numbers and service organizations, including domestic violence service providers or social and emotional learning (SEL) experts. The policy also will be included in the student and parent handbooks with information on how students and parents/caregivers can seek services and/or report incidents and file formal, written complaints.

12. Monitoring and Reporting to School Board

The school shall monitor the procedures outlined in this policy to ensure their implementation and effectiveness and to inform improvements. An annual report back to the School Board shall document implementation activities annual including: assignment of a Prevention Liaison; provision of classroom education and other youth engagement activities; staff training dates and percent attendance; and aggregate data on reported complaints, investigations and outcomes.





DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL POLICY

TO INCREASE STUDENT SAFETY & IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE:

PROMOTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND PREVENTING TEEN DATING VIOLENCE^{11,12}

XYZ School District recognizes that the development of a student, both academically and personally, reflects not only the educational programs and goals of the district, but also the atmosphere in which the student attends school.^{13,14,15} As one in three adolescent girls is a victim of teen dating violence and about 72 percent of eighth and ninth graders report dating, this policy promotes a specific, focused and integrated system of supports to build a school climate that encourages healthy relationships and addresses all forms of teen dating violence (verbal, emotional, sexual, physical and electronic¹⁶). Definitions of all terms used in this policy are listed in Appendix F.

The District shall adopt this policy and assist schools in implementing these guidelines as part of existing policies and other efforts to address related forms of violence among students such as bullying, electronic abuse (often called cyberbullying), harassment and sexual harassment. Addressing teen dating violence as part of bullying prevention efforts is critical since the behaviors are often the same; bullying begins early with peers and if unchecked can graduate into teen dating violence in adolescence. Research suggests that students who bully their peers are more likely to physically and

¹¹ This model policy is a product of *Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships*, a prevention initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Blue Shield of California Foundations focused on 11-to 14-year-olds. In addition to a focus on school policy, the other major components of the initiative are: 1) educating middle school students; 2) engaging parents to support their children's healthy relationships; 3) social marketing to address community and societal norms; and 4) involvement of high school students as champions of teen dating violence prevention and mentors for younger students.

¹² While this is primarily a middle-school policy that covers the spectrum of prevention and early intervention to intervention, it is a unique primary prevention school policy that can also be applied in high schools to build healthy relationships and prevent teen dating violence. To assist administrators, an electronic version of the policy and the Appendix, as well as additional materials including forms can be found at StartStrong.FuturesWithoutViolence.org. The Appendix includes documents developed with Break the Cycle, a national nonprofit organization committed to ending dating violence. The Appendix E tools may be used by schools to address the continuum of teen dating violence, including intervention and response to serious or escalating abusive behavior.

¹³ Scott, Terrance M., Nelson, C. Michael, and Liaupsin, Carl J. (2001). "Effective Instruction: The Forgotten Component in Preventing School Violence." *Education & Treatment of Children*, 24(3). Special issue: Severe Behavior Disorders of Children and Youth. pp. 309-322.

¹⁴ Geierstanger, S. P., Amaral, G., Mansour, M., & Walters, S. R., (2004). "School-Based Health Center and Academic Performance: Research, Challenges and Recommendations." *Journal of School Health*, 74(9): 347-352.

¹⁵ Roeser, Robert W. and Eccles, Jacquelynne S. (1998). "Linking the Study of Schooling and Mental Health: Selected Issues and Empirical Illustrations." *Educational Psychologist*, 33(4): 153.

¹⁶ Electronic abuse includes the use of online and cellular technologies such as texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk, intimidate or pressure a partner.

sexually abuse future dating partners.¹⁷ Moreover, behavior that appears to be bullying is often gender-based violence related to romantic relationships (competing for the same boy/girl, pressure to conform to traditional gender norms), so the context of the behavior is key to offering appropriate intervention.

For this reason, bullying interventions may provide an opportunity to send abuse prevention messages, build the empathy and skills needed to help stop teen dating violence in the future and promote responsible positive behavior among young teens and in teen culture.

Teen dating violence prevention and intervention strategies can be used in advance of potential state mandates¹⁸ and to meet responsibilities under federal law (see Appendix D). This policy is designed to ensure that every school has staff prepared to recognize, respond to and intervene effectively in incidents. In addition, staff should be equipped to address reports of violence, prevent abusive behaviors by engaging colleagues, parents/caregivers and students in promoting healthy teen relationships¹⁹ and follow up on all incidents.

District policies and school practices that recognize the full continuum of prevention, early intervention, corrective guidance and a protocol for active intervention when violence or harassment occurs are critical to maintaining a school environment that is free of violence, including teen dating violence in all its forms.

While adolescent dating relationships have not been the focus of positive school climate efforts²⁰ including Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) model²¹, it is well established that antisocial behavior (bullying, sexual harassment, gang violence, drug abuse) present serious impediments to

¹⁷ Falb, K., McCauley, H., Decker, M., Gupta, J. Raj, A., & Silverman, J. (2011). "School Bullying Perpetration and other Childhood Risk Factors as Predictors of Adult Intimate Partner Violence Perpetration." *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. Downloaded from at www.archpediatrics.com on June 8, 2011. See StartStrong.FuturesWithoutViolence.org for literature reviews containing additional research on this topic.

¹⁸ As of April 2010, at least nine states have laws that recommend or require school boards to develop curriculum and/or policies on teen dating violence and many more states are considering similar requirements. See: www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=17582.

¹⁹ Healthy relationships rely on several skills that are learned and require practice through an evidence-informed curriculum approach:

- Communication, which involves learning to listen as well as to express oneself effectively;
- Recognizing and setting boundaries, which involves being able to identify an individual's comfort level about relationships issues, and to navigate and negotiate those boundaries with a partner;
- Critical thinking to analyze the motivations for one's own actions and the actions of others;
- Assertiveness to address and withstand peer pressure as well as pressure within a dating relationship and skills to enter and exit relationships safely and respectfully;
- Empathy and capacity to respond to and to intervene when friends are in unhealthy situations and relationships; and
- Responsible use of technology and social networking.

²⁰ The National School Climate Council recommends using a survey of all stakeholders – school leaders, teachers and other staff, students and parents/caregivers - to forge a common vision for a school. Survey questions should seek stakeholders' views on healthy relationships and interpersonal safety as well as intellectual, ethical, civic and other aspects of student life. National School Climate Council (2007). *The School Climate Challenge: Narrowing the Gap Between School Climate Research and School Climate Policy, Practice Guidelines and Teacher Education Policy*. See www.schoolclimate.org/climate/policy.php.

²¹ The procedures that define PBIS are organized around three main themes: Prevention; Multi-Tiered Support and Data-based Decision Making. Investing in prevention of a problem involves: (a) defining and teaching core behavioral expectations (b) acknowledging and rewarding appropriate behavior (e.g., compliance to school rules, safe and respectful peer-to-peer interactions) and (c) establishing a consistent continuum of consequences for problem behaviors.

school success and life adjustment.²² These behaviors are interconnected and fit within the aims of positive school climate efforts to create an environment that helps staff be more aware of abusive behavior and harassment and make prevention and early interventions more effective. In alignment with the positive school climate framework, this policy supports administrators, faculty and staff, parents/caregivers, students and community members in reinforcing good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship and academic success.

SECTION A.

THE FOLLOWING SHALL BE REQUIRED OF THE DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS WITHIN THE DISTRICT, TO BE IMPLEMENTED WITH SUPPORT FROM THE DISTRICT:

1. **Prevention Coordinator and Liaison:** The District shall designate one person as the primary contact for this policy (“Prevention Coordinator”) within one year of enactment. The Prevention Coordinator will be responsible for integrating this policy into existing policy and programs.²³ In addition, each school shall designate a Prevention Liaison who will coordinate with the District level Prevention Coordinator. See Appendix A for additional information.
2. **Prevention Education and Youth Engagement for Students:** School-wide, universal prevention education will be provided for students through the adoption of evidence-informed curriculum on healthy relationships and teen dating violence prevention and other methods. It will include the following topics:
 - Characteristics and skills of healthy relationships and how to promote them;
 - Definition of abusive and unhealthy adolescent relationships, including electronic abuse;²⁴
 - Early warning signs of unhealthy relationships;
 - Link between bullying and teen dating violence;
 - Responsible usage of technology to promote healthy relationship awareness; and
 - School-wide, integrated and multi-faceted primary prevention activities aimed at changing school culture that includes youth-led awareness activities encouraging positive bystander behavior, as well as implementing early intervention with students by school staff.



See Appendix B, Section A for information on evidence-based prevention curricula and best practices.

²² Biglan, A., Holder, H. D., Brennan, P. A., & Foster, S. L. (2004). *Helping Adolescents at Risk: Prevention of Multiple Problem Behaviors*. New York: Guilford.

²³ In some large school districts, this provision can also be applied at the school level.

²⁴ Abusive behavior is defined as the intentional use of emotional, verbal, physical, sexual and/or electronic abuse against a peer or intimate partner, including bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and dating violence.

3. Training for Staff: All staff shall participate in ongoing professional development to promote healthy teen relationships and prevent teen dating violence. Training will address, at a minimum:

- Strategies to foster healthy relationships among youth;
- Understanding potential lifelong health effects of teen dating violence (such as increased risk of suicide, substance abuse, unsafe sexual behavior, unintended pregnancy, and eating disorders);²⁵
- The health and behavioral indicators of teen dating violence and its relationship to bullying;
- District's policy for promoting healthy teen relationships, preventing abuse and responding to students who engage in abusive behavior;
- Early intervention strategies (See Appendix C, Section 1B);
- Safe and age-appropriate interventions for targeted students and accused students; and
- Using the positive school climate strategies to emphasize the importance of adults serving as positive role models and effective Upstanders.



If the Prevention Liaison or other school staff do not have expertise in teen dating violence, a local dating violence services agency or public health organization with expertise may be contracted to deliver training on healthy teen relationships and preventing and responding to teen dating violence until expertise is developed internally. See Appendix B, Section B for more information.

4. Parent/Caregiver Engagement: District shall engage parents/caregivers in opportunities to learn how to help their child(ren) build healthy relationships (See Appendix B, Section C).

5. Response to Suspected or Actual Teen Dating Violence and Abusive Behavior: School administrator or designee will respond to reports and complaints of dating violence by:

- Implementing a protocol for response to reports and complaints initiated by students, school personnel, parents/caregivers, friends or others²⁶ (See Appendix C, Section 2);
- Documenting reported incidents and filed complaints (See Appendix C, Section 2A);
- Treating reported incidents and filed complaints as confidential (limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation);

²⁵ For health consequences of teen dating violence, view www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Teens/The_Connection_Between_Dating_Violence_and_Unhealthy_Behaviors_FINAL.pdf.

²⁶ The accompanying Appendix outlines the preferred reporting protocols, but as students may not feel comfortable talking to school personnel about the issue or if the act involves a school employee, schools may consider using an Anonymous Report form that may be posted on the District's website. Formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous form.

- Implementing reporting procedures and disciplinary procedures specific to these filed complaints, in accordance with the confidentiality limitations (See Appendix C, Section 2);
- Creating accommodations²⁷ such as school-based stay away agreements to preserve targeted students'²⁸ safety (See Appendix C, Section 2C);
- Following procedures to implement protection orders (Appendix C, Section 2E);
- Referring targeted students and accused students to school and/or community resources for services such as counseling, as appropriate (Appendix C, Section 2D); and
- Imposing appropriate sanctions and intervention for students engaging in abusive behavior (Appendix C, Section 2C2).

See Appendix E for suggested disciplinary guidelines/matrix for dating violence incidents.

- 6. Reporting Incidents:** School Prevention Liaison or Principal shall send all incident reports to District Prevention Coordinator within 24 hours of receiving the report.
- 7. Monitoring Program:** The District shall establish and implement tools to monitor and assess teen dating violence prevention activities, incidents and responses, including:
 - Evaluations, using data-based outcomes at least every three years to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the services;²⁹
 - An annual report to the community about campus safety;³⁰ and
 - Where appropriate, surveys (such as integrating teen dating violence questions in a school climate survey or locally-adapted national surveys), tracking systems or other mechanisms that provide useful information for the school community. See Appendix C, Section 2A(6).
- 8. Notice to Parents/Caregivers and Students:** The District shall provide annual written notice to parents/caregivers and students of this policy in multiple languages and prominently display it in school common areas and classrooms with contact information for the Prevention Liaison, counselors, hotline numbers and service organizations, including domestic violence service providers or social and emotional learning (SEL) experts. District shall include a copy of the policy in District and school handbooks. The District shall also inform parents/caregivers about how to report an incident or help their child file a complaint of dating abuse if necessary. See Appendix D, Section 3F.

²⁷ For information on accommodations, see Appendix C, Section 2C.

²⁸ "Targeted Student" is a term being used instead of "victim" to describe the student who is experiencing abusive behavior as defined in this policy. The legal definition for a victim should follow state and federal law.

²⁹ To gather important baseline data, large schools districts can implement their own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Two new questions on teen dating violence that were added to provide clearer data will be included in the 2013 survey. See Mariposa County Project Respect Report on the Teen Dating Climate at Mariposa County High School- Spring 2012: <http://www.mariposarespect.org/surveys.html>. For another example, see the Austin, TX data collection survey: <http://www.centex-communitydashboards.org/socially-and-emotionally-healthy-and-safe/youth-reporting-hurtful-dating-behavior.php>. Also, the CDC School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS) is administered every six years (last administration was in 2012), and that requires participation at the district and school levels. In 2012, a new question was added asking about the presence of a dating violence prevention program. Districts are encouraged to participate in SHPPS once this policy and accompanying program are adopted.

³⁰ See Appendix D 3G on Community Reporting.

SECTION B.

TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE DISTRICT SHALL:

1. Encourage schools to:

- Create an environment that serves to reduce school discipline and student behavior problems by adopting school-wide positive school climate strategies, such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), as well as Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)³¹ curriculum;
- Engage youth as leaders in supporting the goals of the policy and educating the entire school community. Schools are encouraged to develop leadership for promoting healthy relationships and preventing adolescent dating violence by engaging existing youth leaders on campus and/or establishing a new leadership class or club. Youth are encouraged to develop innovative projects, events, campaigns or other strategies of their choosing to promote healthy relationships and prevent violence among their peers. Youth leadership activities, which may be conducted during or after regular school hours, may fulfill students' service learning requirements for certain classes and membership organizations;³²
- Provide opportunities for affected youth to participate in peer support groups (See Appendix C, Section 1B(4)); and
- Provide positive after-school programs and environments that engage youth in building healthy relationships. After-school programs can incorporate prevention curriculum into regular programming or provide opportunities for youth to utilize creative arts to promote healthy relationships in their school or community.³³



2. Encourage students to:

- Take an active role in developing a positive school climate/culture and recognize, respond to and prevent dating abuse in their own lives and among their friends through youth-led projects, events and campaigns to address dating abuse or related issues of concern;
- Learn and practice the skills involved in creating and maintaining healthy relationships and being a positive role model or Upstander;
- Participate in developing a new Student Code of Conduct or adding to an existing Code of Conduct positive expectations for how all members of the school community should be treated and should treat each other; and
- Immediately report incidents of teen dating violence to school personnel.

³¹ Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) incorporates coordinated and comprehensive pro-social education (e.g. evidence-based social emotional learning, character education and developmental assets-related instructional efforts), risk prevention and health and mental health promotion efforts.

³² For youth engagement/leadership programs, see Appendix G for a Resource List.

³³ Examples of theater programs, resiliency-building programs, engaging men and youth programs and other community projects done in Start Strong communities can be found at StartStrong.FuturesWithoutViolence.org.



APPENDIX

■ INTRODUCTION

This Appendix serves as a supplement to *School & District Policies to Increase Student Safety & Improve School Climate: Promoting Healthy Relationships and Preventing Teen Dating Violence*. It is designed to assist schools and Districts in creating plans of action for the promotion of healthy teen relationships and the prevention of and response to teen dating violence. The accompanying School and District policies can be adopted independently or integrated into existing efforts to reduce and prevent other forms of abusive behavior, including sexual harassment and bullying. The Policies and Appendix are intended to help build respectful and peaceful school communities in both middle and high schools.

This Appendix provides procedures and suggestions for achieving the following key goals:

1. Providing prevention education and training to students, parents/caregivers, faculty, staff, and administrators on preventing, recognizing, and responding to teen dating violence;
2. Establishing a protocol for responding to warning signs of violence and incidents of teen dating violence and abusive behavior, focusing on early intervention strategies; and
3. Implementing guidelines to respond to incidents of dating violence and abusive behavior, and where appropriate, implement reporting procedures and disciplinary procedures specific to these incidents.

I. Establishing an Environment that Promotes Positive School Climate

A prevention approach focuses on establishing a positive social climate, in which positive relationships are expected and reinforced by adults and youth on campus. Investing in the prevention of violence in schools requires:

1. Defining and teaching core behavioral expectations and skills utilizing evidence-based curricula;
2. Acknowledging and rewarding appropriate behavior (e.g. compliance with school rules and safe, respectful peer-to-peer interactions); and
3. Establishing a consistent continuum of consequences for problem behavior.

These three basic principles are consistent with existing school-wide interventions, such as School-Wide Positive Behavioral Supports and Positive Youth Development that aim to improve school discipline.³⁴

School interventions that focus on creating a positive school environment, measuring school climate and using this data to promote safer, more supportive and engaging schools show:

- An increase in academic achievement;
- An increase in teacher retention rates;
- Reduced dropout rates; and
- A significant decrease in the rates of violence (social and physical), including teen dating violence;^{35, 36}

Tracking school climate encompasses the measurement of norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching/ learning and leadership practices that shape the quality and character of school life. Interventions involving school-wide behavior management strategies also result in further reductions of antisocial behavior including:

- Vandalism;
- Aggression (including peer-to-peer harassment such as bullying);
- Later delinquency; and
- Risk health behaviors such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.³⁷



This document offers a framework for faculty, staff and the entire school community to engage students in creating safe and healthy school environments. Students will learn to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy relationship behavior, choose respectful and safe relationships, feel secure in speaking to their peers as an Upstander when they witness an incident and engage in raising awareness among their peers and younger students.

³⁴ Osher, D., Bear, G., Sprague, J., & Doyle, W. (2010). "How Can We Improve School Discipline?" *Educational Researcher*, (39):48-58.

³⁵ Cohen, J., McCabe, E.M, Michelli, N.M & Pickeral, T. (2009). "School Climate: Research, Policy, Teacher Education and Practice." *Teachers College Record*, 111(1): 180-213. (Available on: www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=15220.)

³⁶ Cohen, J., Pickeral, T., & Levine, P. (2010). "T K-12 Schools." *Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy*, 3(1): 73-94. Available on: scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/ried/index.

³⁷ Metzler, C.W., Biglan, A., Rusby, J.C., & Sprague, J.R. (2001). "Evaluation of a Comprehensive Behavior Management Program to Improve School-wide Positive Behavior Support." *Education and Treatment of Children*, 24(4), 448-479.

A. Why Address Teen Dating Violence in Schools?

Many children and young people are exposed to and influenced by violence in relationships, families and communities. Teen dating violence can prevent students from achieving their academic goals, compromise their health³⁸, and in extreme circumstances, result in severe injury on and off campus.³⁹

While school administrators may see fights, bullying and sexual harassment as presenting problems, the underlying context for the abusive behavior may stem from emerging romantic or dating relationships. Dating in early adolescence often occurs in the context of peer relationships.

- The January 2010 case of Phoebe Prince in Massachusetts tragically illustrated this. Young adolescents utilize group settings and outings to try out romantic interactions in the safety of friends, dating violence can involve more than a single couple. For example, “hanging out” with friends at the mall or the movie theatre is a form of dating. The term “relationship” is used throughout this document to encompass definitions of adolescent relationships including group or couple’s activities that may evolve and change as adolescents mature.

Prevention and early intervention with youth can have lasting effects on their future relationships. Teaching the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships as well as the skills to navigate and promote healthy relationships, help youth develop a positive framework for future relationships.

Too often, young people are unfamiliar with what a healthy relationship looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Providing age-appropriate, universal prevention strategies, creating a baseline understanding of the specific behaviors and characteristics of teen dating violence, and teaching the skills necessary for healthy and respectful behaviors are the essential elements of effective violence prevention programs.

In cases where students do not respond to “good first teaching,”⁴⁰ teachers are also prepared to sensitively and respectfully facilitate discussions. By using a variety of teaching methods, teachers can support change and engage students in acquiring skills to communicate, cooperate, and resolve conflicts without using violence and impart knowledge about how to prevent future incidents.

B. Linking to Other Anti-Violence Policies and Activities

Policies and initiatives to promote healthy teen relationships and prevent and respond to teen dating violence will link appropriately with similar efforts related to other forms of peer-to-peer violence, particularly bullying and sexual harassment. Recent research suggests important associations between the quality of peer and dating relationships and a continuum of interpersonal violence ranging from bullying to teen dating violence. Boys and girls who used power and aggression in their peer relationships, as evidenced by bullying behaviors or conduct problems, were also more likely to sexually harass same- and opposite-sex peers and were more likely to be physically aggressive

³⁸ www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Teens/The_Connection_Between_Dating_Violence_and_Unhealthy_Behaviors_FINAL.pdf

³⁹ One example is Ortralla Mosley, a 15-year-old who was killed by her ex-boyfriend, another sophomore, on school grounds. The perpetrator had a previous history of physical abuse with another student in 8th grade. abcnews.go.com/2020/Health/story?id=630874&page=1.

⁴⁰ ‘Good first teaching’ is based on the belief that all children can learn with the support of basic minimum conditions such as appropriate materials, adequate instructional time, and investment in professional development. Fountas, I.C. and Pinnell, G.S. (1996) *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

with their dating partners.^{41,42,43} Bullying can also revolve around romantic partners or crushes, which changes the context to teen dating violence. In addition, research has found that students who bully and are bullied are more likely to live with abuse at home.⁴⁴ As a result, developmentally appropriate prevention education will address bullying, sexual harassment, gender roles, teen dating violence and their interconnections. Engaging parents/caregivers in these efforts can be effective as evidenced by research findings that students whose parents/caregivers spoke to them about bullying were more likely to intervene.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Pepler et al., 2006. "A Developmental Perspective on Bullying." *Aggressive Behavior*, 32:376-384.

⁴² Williams, Connolly, Pepler, Craig, & Laporte, 2008. "Risk Models of Dating Aggression Across Different Adolescent Relationships: A Developmental Psychopathology Approach." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 76(4): 622-632.

⁴³ Brengden, M., Vitaro, F., Tremblay, R., & Wanner, B., (2002). "Parent and Peer Effects on Delinquency-related Violence and Dating Violence: A Test of Two Mediationall Models." *Social Development*, 11(2): 225-244.

⁴⁴ Centers for Disease Control. Bullying Among middle and high school students – Massachusetts, 2009. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. April 22, 2011 / 60(15);465-471.

⁴⁵ Research by Alan Heisterkamp, Ed.D of the Sioux City Project: <http://www.uni.edu/cvp/alan-heisterkamp-edd>.





■ APPENDIX A: PREVENTION COORDINATOR AND LIAISON

I. Roles

1. **The District Prevention Coordinator (“Coordinator”)** may be the Title IX Coordinator, Violence Prevention Coordinator, School Safety Officer, School Resource Officer, School Health Director or other administrator overseeing prevention efforts that may include bullying, electronic abuse and drug abuse. The Prevention Coordinator is responsible for collaborating with families and community stakeholders to educate students and school personnel on teen dating violence. The Coordinator also will work with the Prevention Liaison at each school to implement these goals.
2. **The School Prevention Liaison (“Liaison”)** may be a social worker, guidance counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, School Safety Officer, School Resource Officer or other staff member responsible for Title IX and/or other violence and drug prevention efforts. The Liaison may serve on existing teams that address school safety and school climate, such as threat assessment teams and Safe and Drug-Free School Teams. The Liaison will facilitate training for school personnel and educational activities for youth, work with colleagues when a student exhibits early warning signs of being a targeted student or accused student, provide a specialized response to abusive behavior on campus, act as a liaison between the school and students who are experiencing abusive behavior and act as a liaison to community resources and law enforcement.

II. Training

The Prevention Coordinator and Prevention Liaison shall receive instruction on the following prevention objectives, which may be available from a local domestic violence and/or sexual assault organization, public health agency, state-level coalition or online training resource:

A. Promoting Healthy Teen Relationships

- Characteristics of healthy and caring relationships and how to promote them;
- Modeling respectful behavior toward girls and other youth in daily life;
- Recognizing gender equity and gender norms and their effects on young people’s ability to make and implement decisions regarding their relationships;
- Learning communication and other skills essential to healthy relationships; and
- Providing opportunities for youth-developed and youth-led strategies to promote positive relationship norms.

B. Preventing and Responding to Teen Dating Violence

- Defining dating violence and abusive behavior;
- Recognizing the early warning signs of teen dating violence and how dating violence relates to bullying;
- Identifying and proposing alternatives to abusive behavior;
- Understanding the negative health effects of dating and sexual violence;
- Preparing to fulfill their responsibilities under school policy regarding responding to incidents and reports of abusive behavior;
- Becoming familiar with in-school and community services; and
- Understanding Federal and state confidentiality and reporting requirements.

C. In addition to the two core educational objectives listed above, trainings for the Prevention Coordinator and Prevention Liaison will include:

- Descriptions of their role promoting healthy relationships including collaborating with the administration, health educators, social services, counselors, school nurses, school resource officers⁴⁶ and youth organizations;
- Theories and dynamics of bullying, dating violence, electronic abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence, including reproductive coercion;⁴⁷
- The interconnections between bullying, sexual harassment and dating violence, and other school safety issues;
- Effective strategies for responding to targeted students of abusive behavior, including crisis intervention, safety planning, and referrals to community resources;
- Barriers to teens leaving abusive relationships and seeking help from adults;
- Strategies to engaging parents/caregivers in prevention education;
- Dating violence in special populations, including LGBTQ teens and parenting teens;
- Cultural competence and its relationship to dating violence and sexual violence;
- Use of data to track implementation and effectiveness; and
- Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS)⁴⁸ or other academic intervention models such as Response to Intervention (RTI).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ An SRO is a certified law enforcement officer who is permanently assigned to provide coverage to a school or a set of schools. The SRO is specifically trained to perform three roles: law enforcement officer; law-related counselor and law-related education teacher. The SRO may not be a DARE officer (although many have received such training), security guard or officer who has been placed temporarily in a school in response to a crisis situation but rather an officer who acts as a comprehensive resource for his/her school (Center for the Prevention of School Violence).

⁴⁷ Miller, E., Decker, M.R., McCauley, H.L., Tancredi, D.J., Levenson, R.R., Waldman, J., Schoenwald, P., & Silverman, J.G. (2010). "Pregnancy Coercion, Intimate Partner Violence and Unintended Pregnancy." *Contraception*, 81(4): 316-322, (DOI: 10.1016/j.contraception.2009.12.004).

⁴⁸ The procedures that define PBIS are organized around three main themes: Prevention, Multi-Tiered Support, and Data-based Decision Making. Investing in prevention of a problem involves (a) defining and teaching core behavioral expectations; (b) acknowledging and rewarding appropriate behavior (e.g., compliance with school rules, safe and respectful peer-to-peer interactions); and (c) establishing a consistent continuum of consequences for problem behavior.

⁴⁹ Response to Intervention (RTI) is based on a problem-solving approach that considers environmental factors as they might apply to an individual student's difficulty, and provides services/intervention as soon as the student has demonstrated a need. Focused primarily on addressing academic problems, RTI has emerged as a new way to consider both disability identification and early intervention assistance for the "most vulnerable, academically unresponsive children" in schools and school districts. Fuchs, D., & Deshler, D. D. (2007). "What We Need to Know About Responsiveness to Intervention (and Shouldn't Be Afraid to Ask)." *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 22:129-136.



■ APPENDIX B: PREVENTION EDUCATION AND TRAINING

I. Education of Students

1. Classroom education about healthy relationships and prevention of teen dating violence may be provided using specialized curricula delivered in health, science, language arts or physical education programs and/or tied into existing school safety, bullying and sexual harassment education. The National Health Education Standards outline important instruction and assessment practices and can provide supportive alignment to healthy relationship and teen dating violence prevention education and activities. Students shall also receive education regarding their rights under the school district's policy as well as information on how to report an incident of dating violence or other forms of harassment or abuse.

The following topics are recommended for classroom education as well as other prevention activities:⁵⁰

- Skills for effective communication;^{51, 52}
- Defining, communicating, and respecting personal boundaries;
- Concepts of healthy relationships, including helping youth explore what they deserve to expect in an intimate relationship, such as trust, support, respect, shared responsibility, honesty, accountability, negotiation, fairness, communication and equality;⁵³
- How to be an Upstander⁵⁴ and help a friend who is a targeted student of bullying, dating violence or electronic abuse;

⁵⁰ American Cancer Society (2007). National Health Education Standards (2007). www.cancer.org/Healthy/MoreWaysACSHelpsYouStayWell/SchoolHealth/national-health-education-standards-2007.

⁵¹ Wolfe, DA., Crooks, CV., Hughes, R., & Jaffee, P. (2001). Youth Relationships Program Featuring the Fourth R for Healthy Relationships. London, ON, Canada: CAMH Centre for Prevention Science. (www.youthrelationships.org) (Health and Physical Education, English and After-School programs available).

⁵² Foshee, V., & Langwick, S. (2004). Safe Dates: An Adolescent Dating Abuse Prevention Curriculum. Center City, MN: Hazelden Foundation. (www.hazelden.org).

⁵³ Greene, T., & Austin, E. (2009). Be Strong: From the Inside Out, An Asset-Based Promotion and Violence Prevention Curriculum Empowering Young Women Ages 13-19. Los Angeles, CA: Peace Over Violence.

⁵⁴ Upstander is a term used by the National School Climate Center (formerly, the Center for Social and Emotional Education). It is defined in the context of bully-victim situations, as someone who recognizes the situation and does something to make it right. www.schoolclimate.org/bullybust/upstanderbehavior.php.

- The roles that accused students⁵⁵, targeted students⁵⁶, and Upstanders play in abusive, harassing incidents and exploring how each group can de-escalate and/or resolve conflict;
- Appropriate social skills training to help students avoid isolation and interact in a healthy manner;
- Identifying and challenging school and societal norms that support name-calling, harassment, abusive behavior and discrimination based on gender, race and sexual preference;
- The role of media in supporting stereotypes and how these stereotypes, if believed, may trigger bullying, abuse or violence in relationships, including sexual violence; and
- Creative social marketing/public education activities and events that are developed and led by youth to educate and engage their peers, school community, and parents/caregivers.

Districts are strongly encouraged to consult with local organizations specializing in dating violence or sexual assault prevention to identify age-appropriate and culturally-sensitive prevention curricula.

2. Successful prevention programs rely on multiple exposures to the topic. To the extent possible, schools shall use multiple prevention strategies in addition to classroom lessons. These may include youth-led projects that create materials to raise awareness of the policy that use contemporary youth language, including:

- Brochures and posters to be placed around the school;
- A webpage to be featured on the school's website;
- A poster competition;
- Skits or plays on the topic;
- Assemblies addressing healthy relationships; and
- An educational campaign featuring a variety of activities within a specific time period such as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, usually observed in February.



II. Staff Training

All staff should receive ongoing professional development training on the topics listed in above in Appendix A, 2B. If the Prevention Liaison or Prevention Coordinator does not have expertise in this topic, a local dating violence service provider may be contracted to provide training on promoting healthy relationships and preventing teen dating violence until internal expertise is developed.

⁵⁵ The term “accused student” refers to an individual who is accused of or has committed any act or threat of abusive behavior as defined in this policy. The term is used to replace “offender” in an effort not to label young people prematurely.

⁵⁶ The term “targeted student” refers the student who is experiencing abusive behavior as defined in this policy. The word is used to replace “victim” to enable students to better identify with the policy. It should not be interpreted as replacing the term victim for legal or supportive services.

III. Parent/Caregiver Awareness

Parents/Caregivers shall be engaged and educated to the fullest extent possible about their role in contributing to a positive school climate, talking to their youth about healthy relationships and addressing signs of teen dating violence. Schools are encouraged to utilize strategies that will most successfully reach the diverse parents/caregivers in their school community.

Districts interested in engaging parents/caregivers may conduct prevention education activities at a range of events that reach parents/caregivers, including:

- PTA meetings, Parent-Teacher conferences, Parent Support Counselor visits, Back to School programs, programs for transition to middle and high school and student performances related to the topic; and/or
- Parent/Caregiver awareness workshops addressing the importance of parents/caregivers having conversations with their children about healthy relationships and teen dating violence, that include skill- based exercises on how to talk with their child, the importance of modeling respectful behavior in their own adult relationships, understanding warning signs and knowing what to do if they suspect their child is in an abusive relationship or witnessing one.

These activities may be short and interactive (5-15 minutes) or longer (30-75 minutes), depending on the environment and participants.

Research indicates that parents/caregivers want to prepare their children for dating but feel unprepared to initiate this conversation. Equally important, the research indicates that workshops addressing parents' and caregivers' more immediate concerns related to their pre-teen children are more successful in engaging parents/caregivers to talk about healthy relationships.⁵⁷ Workshop topics may include:

- How to prepare your pre-teen or early adolescent, before s/he starts dating, to develop healthy relationships;
- How to parent in a digital age; and
- How to teach your child to be a good friend by speaking up with peers and friends when unhealthy behaviors occur.⁵⁸

Parent/Caregiver education may include guest speakers such as pediatricians, adolescent specialists/ academics, school counselors, school nurses and/or health teachers, domestic violence/sexual assault experts and/or testimonials of older youth that have overcome violent relationships.⁵⁹ It is also important to make available to parents/caregivers a list of community-based resources that provide assistance when these behaviors are evident.

⁵⁷ Hart Research Associates (2009), unpublished. *Start Strong Initiative: Communicating with Parent/Caregivers - A Report on the Findings from Focus Groups and Survey Research*. Contact Futures Without Violence: info@futureswithoutviolence.org, (415-678-5500).

⁵⁸ See Futures Without Violence Website for examples of Parent Workshops: www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org

⁵⁹ Ibid. Parents/Caregivers indicated that these are the people they most want to receive guidance from on how to talk to their pre-teens about developing healthy relationships.



■ APPENDIX C: INTERVENTION

I. Early Intervention

Teachers, staff, and other school personnel shall receive ongoing professional development on how to recognize and intervene when a student or group of students displays early warning signs of teen dating violence such as pressuring, controlling or threatening behavior or obtaining inappropriate photographs by coercion. Staff will be trained to:

- Encourage students to refrain from participating in unhealthy relationship behavior (such as egging on someone who is harassing another student) and take action to report or interrupt unhealthy behavior that they witness among peers, when they can do so safely;
- Encourage Upstanders to report to a staff member or other trusted adult about the behavior; and
- Identify students who are at risk of becoming targeted students or potential offenders of abusive or violent behavior and create a teachable moment with the students and/or consult with the Prevention Liaison at the earliest opportunity to determine an appropriate early intervention strategy.

A. Early Warning Signs

Teachers, administrators and other school support staff shall be trained to look for early warning signs of violence to self and others — certain behavioral and emotional signs that, when viewed in context, can signal a troubled youth who needs help. Examples of warning signs for potential offenders or targeted students of dating violence may include:⁶⁰

- Poor social skills;
- Inability to manage anger and conflict;
- Belief that dating violence is acceptable;
- Witnessing violence at home;
- Alcohol use;
- Bullying history
- Having behavior problems in other areas;

⁶⁰ Ibid.

- Having a friend involved with dating violence; and/or
- Witnessing violence in the community.

Other warning behaviors may include:

- Excessive feelings of jealousy;
- Excessive feelings of isolation and loneliness;
- Feelings of being picked on and persecuted; and/or
- Expression of violence in writings and drawings.

Staff shall be counseled to refer any instances of troublesome behavior to the Prevention Coordinator, Prevention Liaison and/or appropriate professionals including a school psychologist, school nurse, school counselor or teen dating violence specialists at outside agencies.

Since studies show that people who harm their dating partners are more depressed and are more aggressive than peers,⁶¹ it is critical to make responsible efforts to get help for the youth before problems escalate.



B. Early Intervention Strategies

In accordance with a positive school climate approach, schools are encouraged to employ a tiered approach in improving campus safety and climate by implementing:

1. Universal approaches that include classroom curricula, student assemblies, parent/caregiver education opportunities or community awareness campaigns;
2. Targeted intervention tools for specific instances of need, such as counseling and small group interventions, parent/caregiver conferences, mentoring, behavior contracts; and
3. Referrals to intensive school and community-based interventions for students engaging in at-risk behavior.

Parallel to the PBIS approach, the following four efforts are important to creating a positive school climate that prevents and responds early to relationship violence:

1. **Violence Prevention and Intervention Team that includes Prevention Liaison and/or Prevention Coordinator:** Schools can identify the most appropriate team in place that addresses discipline or behavioral concerns and expand its role to identify students who may require early intervention for victimization and perpetration of dating violence. The team will include the Prevention Liaison, School Health Coordinator, teachers, administrators, and professional staff including a Behavioral Health Specialist. The purpose of the team is to provide an opportunity for school employees to combine their knowledge and information in a

⁶¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Understanding Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet 2009*, www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/TeenDatingViolence2009-a.pdf.

way that provides a comprehensive view of students' needs with regard to prevention of and interventions for abusive behavior. Schools should take care to keep all team discussions and records confidential to the extent allowed or mandated by law.⁶²

2. Teachable Moments: Teachable Moments are situations that occur either among students, in the media, or in the community, which can be turned into educational opportunities to promote healthy, respectful relationships. One example is positive reinforcement of a behavior by highlighting a student in the class or a person in the community or media that exemplifies healthy relationship qualities such as respect for others. Teachers can complement students who display positive behaviors and say that they want to see more of this type of behavior inside and outside the classroom. Conversely, a teachable moment may involve intervening in disrespectful or damaging behavior that is witnessed by other students. While teachers cannot stop youth from making hurtful comments in general, they CAN stop kids from making hurtful comments in their presence with three easy steps: Say it, Claim it and Stop it.

- i. **Say it:** "I just heard you call Natalie a slut." (This makes it really clear to the student and to everyone else exactly what the teacher is addressing)
- ii. **Claim it:** "The word 'slut' is personally offensive to me and it is an offensive term in general. It is inappropriate to use that kind of language in my classroom." (The teacher makes it clear that this is his/her personal space, he/she is in charge, and it offends HIM/HER)
- iii. **Stop it:** "Please don't ever use that word in this classroom or in my presence again." (That's pretty clear)

Then continue with the lesson. When teachers consistently respond this way to harmful language, the space where discrimination and verbal abuse live gets smaller. In schools where all teachers respond this way to abusive language, the space for discrimination is almost nonexistent.

3. Youth Leadership Training: In order to change social norms, schools can identify a set of students who can help influence social norms and educate others. These may be students in existing leadership clubs or classes who receive specialized educational sessions on becoming role models, peer educators or peer leaders on preventing bullying, sexual harassment, and teen dating violence. Participants in youth leadership training may be encouraged to develop a youth-led project or campaign to promote healthy relationships among their peers. A youth leadership program could be provided in schools or in a community setting.^{63, 64}

4. Student Support Groups: Student support groups, led by a trusted school- or community-based counselor can provide a safe place for youth to learn and practice healthy relationship skills. Confidentiality for participants is critical for creating an emotionally safe and comfortable environment where students can share personal experiences and feelings. Small, same-sex

⁶² Adapted loosely from the IMPACT Team model at Austin Independent School District, 2009 Start Strong Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA: July 29-31, 2009, "One District's Experience for Addressing Student-on-Student Sexual Harassment in Schools."

⁶³ SafePlace's Expect Respect Program has an 8-session program training students as role models and peer educators on issues including bullying, sexual harassment, and teen dating violence prevention, www.safeplace.org/expectrespect.

⁶⁴ Break the Cycle has a Speak Act Change Youth Advocacy kit, a youth activism, service-learning and peer leadership program to help youth become advocates for healthy relationships while promoting their positive development, see www.respect-works.org.

groups that meet regularly for 12-24 weeks have been successful in helping boys and girls explore the impact of violence and abuse and learn how to have healthy relationships in the future. Trained facilitators can use a support group curriculum to help students communicate assertively, set limits and boundaries, understand coercion vs. consent, end relationships safely, among other important relationship skills.⁶⁵ While both partners in an abusive relationship can benefit from a peer support group, targeted students and their accused students should never be required to meet or placed in the same support group.

II. School Response to Serious or Escalating Incidents of Abusive Behavior

The protocol outlined below is designed to apply to any physical, sexual, serious or escalating incidents of abusive behavior, including teen dating violence. Serious incidents, such as emotional/psychological abuse, physical contact, using a weapon, stalking, sexual comments/gesture or rape/ attempted rape can appear without a corresponding intimate relationship. While some of the disciplinary consequences to these behaviors may be triggered under existing policies, it is important to recognize when the behavior is part of an abusive relationship and to use appropriate documentation, protocols, and safety measures.

A. Documentation

The policy gives the primary responsibility for responding to abusive behavior to the school administrator (otherwise referred to as the Administrator), or designee, who may be the School Prevention Liaison.

1. School employees shall provide the Administrator (or Prevention Liaison) written documentation of any and all actions taken on behalf of a student experiencing abusive or violent behavior. If available, schools are encouraged to use the same documentation protocol used by the school's Title IX Coordinator to minimize additional work by school employees when problem-solving around an individual or group of individuals. School personnel shall consult office referral data to determine what instruction or interventions have already been considered or utilized and their effectiveness.
2. This documentation of incidents and complaints filed by school employees or a student shall include the following elements:
 - Description of incident(s), including acts by accused student, location, date and time, and witnesses (include original complaint form, if available);⁶⁶
 - Information about targeted student and accused student, including class schedules, group and club memberships, and school activities;
 - Requests for accommodation⁶⁷ or services by targeted student;

⁶⁵ See Expect Respect for information on their support groups and evaluation results: www.SafePlace.org/ExpectRespect.

⁶⁶ Incidents documented should include any incidents, whether they occurred on or off campus. See Appendix E for sample form.

⁶⁷ Accommodation is defined as a change or modification to a student's school enrollment, participation or environment, which increases access to meaningful education or safety for a student who is experiencing abuse or violence. A sample Request for Accommodation form can be found within Break the Cycle's *District of Columbia Public School District Dating Violence and Sexual Violence*.

- All evidence gathered during the investigation;⁶⁸
- Report of findings, including disciplinary and accommodation recommendations;
- Response actions taken with both targeted student and accused student, including safety planning, referrals for services and counseling, and disciplinary actions; and
- Follow-up actions, including response to disciplinary actions, accused student compliance, utilization of referrals for services, reviews of safety plans, and status reports from the targeted student, including further referrals for services.

3. The Administrator shall keep files with the written documentation in a secure, locked filing cabinet or password-protected computer. In situations where further security is necessary, files may be identified by a number coding system without visible student names. Records of reports and complaints and investigations regarding abusive behavior shall be kept in a file separate from academic records, in order to prevent inadvertent disclosure of confidential information. Access to student files, including by parents/caregivers is governed by federal and state laws; nothing in this policy or Appendix will be construed to alter existing school policies on access to student files.

4. Schools shall track, and archive aggregate, annual data on the incidence, types, and prevalence of abusive behavior.⁶⁹ In accordance with existing local, state and federal reporting requirements, it is the duty of the Administrator to compile such data at the close of each school year and include in a safety report compiled for the community.

5. Since effective prevention efforts often generate student disclosures of abusive behavior or victimization which increases the number of needed interventions, school annual reports may include the following:

- Number and type of requests for accommodation;
- Number of accommodation requests granted and denied;
- Effectiveness of interventions;
- Number of serious incidents of abusive behavior; and
- Remedial action taken to address incidents while ensuring the confidentiality of individual cases.



⁶⁸ Corroboration of witnesses and/or physical evidence should not be required to find that an abusive incident took place.

⁶⁹ In some cases this requirement would be set by the state education agency and therefore beyond the reach of this policy.

6. Monitoring

For example, the Austin, TX Independent School District includes questions on hurtful and controlling dating relationships in their Substance Use and Safety Survey to determine types of bullying and harassment in students' relationships. This survey data is also included as a priority indicator of Social/Emotional Health and Safety on the Austin/Travis County online dashboard at <http://www.centex-communitydashboards.org/socially-and-emotionally-healthy-and-safe/youth-reporting-hurtful-dating-behavior.php>. The dashboard was created by Ready-by-21 and Community Action Network. The County also tracks indicators reflecting Academic Success, Physical Health and Safety and Social and Civic Engagement.

B. Protocol for Responding to Serious Incidents

Serious incidents such as assault or sexual assault would require calling law enforcement. When a student discloses an incident of abusive behavior to a school employee, or if a school employee witnesses an incident that he/she believes is abusive behavior, the school employee shall take the following actions, or make a timely referral to the School Prevention Liaison who shall take the following actions as soon as possible:

- Separate the targeted student from the accused student engaging in abusive behavior;
- Speak separately with the targeted student, the accused student engaging in abusive behavior, and any witnesses;
- Let the students know that you will be contacting their parents/caregivers to set up separate meetings with the School Prevention Liaison to discuss the incident and school response;⁷⁰ Never require the targeted student and accused student engaging in abusive behavior to meet together;
- Serious incidents such as assault or sexual assault, law enforcement should be called;
- Inform the targeted student of this policy and his/her rights under the policy, including his/her right to ask for accommodations, file charges or pursue a legal protective order,⁷¹ and/or to request a school-based stay away agreement;
- Encourage the targeted student and accused student to use available on-campus resources such as a school counselor or school nurse who have been trained in dealing with teen dating violence;
- Provide specific permission for the accused student and targeted student to leave the classroom to speak with a counselor or administrator at any time;

⁷⁰ When notifying the parent/caregiver, student safety may be in danger if there is violence in the home. It is important to speak with the student regarding whether notification of parents/caregivers might further jeopardize the student's safety. For example, if a student is Gay or Lesbian and has not come out to his or parents/caregivers, parental notification may result in increased conflict, violence or even the student's expulsion from the home.

⁷¹ For information about civil protection order laws in your state, see www.breakthecycle.org/content/teen-dating-violence-state-law-report-cards.

- Assist targeted student to create a safety plan (if she/he desires) that addresses on-and off-campus protection, including the option of a school-based stay away agreement (see Appendix E);⁷²
- Administer immediate consequences to the accused student, including, if appropriate, disciplinary procedures (see Appendix E);
- Issue a school-based stay-away agreement to the accused student in a meeting with the student and his/her parent(s)/caregiver(s) if desired by the targeted student;
- Assist the accused student engaging in abusive behavior and targeted student in obtaining counseling and support services;
- Assist with monitoring and enforcement of legal protection orders and/or school-based stay-away agreement, as defined by this policy; and
- Offer ongoing support and advocacy to the targeted student. Assess needs of accused student for counseling, behavioral interventions and increased supervision to ensure the safety of both students.

These duties complement any steps the school employee is required to take pursuant to state law or individual school policy, including mandatory reporting.

C. Protocol for Student Accommodations in Response to Serious or Escalating Incidents of Abusive Behavior

1. Targeted Student Accommodations

Provide immediate attention to a targeted student of abusive behavior, which may include a referral to a law enforcement officer or healthcare provider. All accommodation requests are strictly confidential. School employees shall only share confidential student information to the extent necessary to implement an accommodation or to protect the student's safety. Use an existing complaint form and follow standard response protocols.

A Request for Accommodation allows a targeted student of abusive behavior to ask the school to implement changes necessary to ensure his/her continued safety; these changes do not affect the accused student's school enrollment, participation or environment. Examples of accommodations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Change of class seat assignment;
- Change of locker assignment;
- Change of class schedule;
- Permission to leave class to see a counselor, social worker, or healthcare provider;
- Early or late dismissal;
- Private space for meeting with counselors and school employees regarding abusive behavior, and related academic, mental health, and/or health issues;

⁷² See Appendix E for Safety Plan form.

- Excused absence for classes missed due to abusive behavior, such as fear of violence due to threats; physical or mental health appointments or court appearances;
- Makeup academic work, including homework, quizzes, tests and any other graded work for classes missed due to abusive behavior or threats;
- Alternative education plan for targeted student;
- School transfer for targeted student;
- School transfer for accused student; and
- School-based Stay Away Agreement (see Appendix E).

2. Accused Student Engaging in Abusive Behavior Intervention

Determine appropriate disciplinary action against the accused student engaged in abusive behavior. Offer a range of sanctions, such as educational consequences or disciplinary actions, which may vary with individual circumstance, including repetition, age and the impact of the abusive behavior on the targeted student (See Appendix E). Make complaint forms available to all students at any time through any counselor or administrator. Counselors and administrators may be asked to offer students assistance in filling out the forms.

Make it clear that retaliation against a targeted student, an accused student engaged in abusive behavior or potential witness is strictly prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action. Any student who knowingly makes a false complaint against another student will be subject to disciplinary action.⁷³

The Prevention Coordinator or Liaison shall document the resolution of the complaint. A resolution requiring changes to the targeted student's school enrollment, participation or environment will not be considered final unless approved by the targeted student and the school. Transfer of the targeted student shall require the consent of the student, the student's parents/caregivers, and the school. A denial of a request for accommodation will include the reasons for the denial and an explanation of the established formal appeals process. The Administrator is responsible for notifying the student's teachers when an accommodation affects their classrooms.

All accommodations under this policy are voluntary; the student may choose to decline or rescind any accommodation at any time by notifying the Prevention Coordinator or Liaison. The student shall not be subject to any retribution or disciplinary action for such decisions and shall not lose the right to request and receive future accommodations.

Any ensuing disciplinary hearings will be conducted according to the school's disciplinary procedures.⁷⁴ In any hearing conducted as the result of a report of complaint of abusive behavior, the targeted student has the following rights, to the extent allowed by the hearing process and permitted by law:

- The right to express his/her wishes regarding resolution to the hearing officer;
- The right to have his/her safety considered and respected at all stages of the process;

⁷³ It is important to note that if a claim cannot be verified, that does not equate to "knowingly falsifying" the claim. Assertion that a claim is falsified must require a higher standard or finding that the incident did not in fact occur and the student intentionally falsified the record.

⁷⁴ Best practice dictates that the targeted student and accused student be heard separately in any administrative proceeding or hearing room, and that safety issues are carefully taken into account.

- The right to be notified of time, location, status and outcome of the hearing in a timely manner;
- The right to be present during the hearing;
- The right to have an advocate present during the hearing process, including a Prevention Coordinator, Prevention Liaison, parent/caregiver or community-based advocate;
- The right to present a targeted student impact statement which will become part of the record;
- The right to have accommodations addressed in any resolution; and
- The right to meet with the school employees representing the school in the hearing process.

D. Protocol for Working with Targeted Students and Accused Students

1. Working with the Targeted Student

In working with the targeted student, schools shall make every reasonable effort to protect the due process rights of the accused student while ensuring the safety of the targeted student. Schools shall consider adopting the following methods of intervention with the targeted student:

- Hold a conference with the targeted student and parent/caregiver;
- Identify immediate actions that can be taken to increase the targeted student's safety and ability to participate in school without fear or intimidation, including positive behavior support interventions;
- Offer or refer targeted student and accused student to confidential one-on-one counseling or a support group to increase social support and provide an emotionally safe and confidential setting for them to learn and practice healthy relationship skills. The targeted student and accused student should never be in the same group. The Prevention Liaison, school counselor or community based organization may provide the counseling and/or referrals for support and advocacy;
- Inform the student and parent/caregiver of school and community resources as needed, including their right to file charges or seek legal protection;
- Encourage the student to report further incidents;
- Inform the targeted student of his/her right to request a School-based Stay-Away Agreement (see Appendix E), a plan for increasing safety for the targeted student at school. A School-based Stay Away Agreement can be used to implement or support a legal protective order at school or offered to a targeted student when he/she is unwilling or ineligible to obtain a legal protective order. A School-based Stay Away Agreement may only be issued to the offending student upon the targeted student's request. Violations of the School-based Stay Away Agreement by the offender shall be brought to the school's attention immediately by the targeted student. If the targeted student declines to request a School-based Stay Away Agreement, document that decision on the complaint form;
- Inform the targeted student of his/her right to file a complaint alleging sexual harassment directly with the Title IX Coordinator in situations also involving sexual harassment;

- Monitor the targeted student's safety as needed. Assist the targeted student to create a safety plan (see Appendix E) for the school day and for after-school hours;
- Document the meeting and any action plans on the complaint form. If the targeted student or parent/caregiver declines to document the incident, note this on the complaint form; and
- Store all complaint forms in a separate, confidential file and document subsequent follow-up actions and complaints on a complaint form. The Administrator may provide the targeted student with the right to have a support person present during all stages of the investigation.

2. Working with the Accused Student

Schools shall make every reasonable effort to protect the due process rights of the accused student and the safety of the targeted student. Schools shall consider adopting the following methods of intervention with the accused student:

- Hold a conference with the accused student and parent/caregiver;
- Allow the accused student an opportunity to respond verbally or in writing to the allegations;
- Emphasize expectations for positive behavior;
- Provide referrals for counseling, support and advocacy at school or in the community;
- Identify and implement disciplinary and other actions and consequences that will be taken to prevent further incidents, including: verbal warnings, education, suspension, dangerousness assessments, the opportunity for transfer, involuntary transfer and/or a report to law enforcement;
- Issue a school-based stay away agreement (see Appendix E) to the accused student when desired by the targeted student. Have a meeting with the accused student and his/her parent(s)/caregiver(s) and inform them of other supportive services available at school or in the community;
- Address the serious consequences of retaliation against the targeted student for reporting the incident or cooperating with the investigation;
- Increase supervision of the accused student as needed; and
- Document the meeting and action plans on the complaint form.

E. Enforcement of Protection Orders

Enforcement of court-issued protection orders is critical to ensuring safety for students experiencing teen dating violence or sexual violence. Schools have a duty to take any and all steps necessary to enforce a protection order held by a student.

1. Work with the protected student to create an enforcement plan regardless of whether the restrained individual is a student. In addition, provide the protected student with information about reporting violations of the protection order, assist him/her with reporting any violations, and again, provide him/her with a list of campus and community resources.

2. Schedule a separate meeting with the accused student and his/her parents/caregivers if desired by the targeted student. Make any necessary changes to the restrained student's school enrollment, participation or environment in order to comply with the protection order and ensure the protected student's safety.
3. Work with the protected student and the school to make any changes to the protected student's school enrollment, participation, or environment to which he/she consents and which are necessary to ensure his/her safety.
4. Changes to the restrained student's school enrollment, participation, or environment that are made pursuant to a valid protection order do not require a written complaint by the protected student. The restrained student may file a complaint using the procedures set forth in this policy to challenge any changes made to his/her school enrollment, participation or environment to enforce a protection order.

Campus security and administrators may call law enforcement if they have a reasonable belief that there has been a violation of a protection order on the school campus, in the immediate proximity of the school campus or during a school-sponsored event or other areas designated by the order. Campus police shall promptly respond to claims of a violation of a restraining or protective order. Campus police failure to respond promptly will be reported to law enforcement's complaint department by the Administrator. If the school district does not have campus police officers, local law enforcement can be contacted to report a violation of a restraining or protective order.

F. School-based Stay Away Agreements⁷⁵

Schools are encouraged to use a School-based Stay Away Agreement (see Appendix E) at the request of a targeted student who is unwilling or ineligible to obtain a legal protection order as a form of accommodation. Schools may also use this form as a tool to implement court-issued protection orders.

A school-based stay away agreement provides a list of conditions to be followed by the accused student while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. Failure to meet the conditions can have school-based consequences such as suspension and expulsion as well as other disciplinary measures. A school-based stay away agreement is designed to promote the safety of the targeted student and can be helpful for addressing a wider range of abusive behaviors, especially at the middle school level. Stay away agreements are most appropriately developed and signed in a conference with the accused student and his/her parent/caregiver(s). If the parent/caregiver is unavailable or unwilling to attend the conference, the school may note this on the agreement. A school-based stay away agreement may include the following elements:

1. A description of the relationship between the targeted student and accused student;
2. A list of behaviors that the offender may not do (e.g., talking to the targeted student, sitting near the targeted student and/or sending notes to the targeted student);

⁷⁵ The School-based Stay Away Agreement is one component of the Austin Independent School District's policy concerning bullying, sexual harassment and dating violence. The Stay Away Agreement is issued, upon request of the targeted student, by the administrator to the offending student and his/her parent/caregiver in order to prevent further incidents. The efficacy of this instrument has not been tested. It should not supplant or replace legal protective orders or the consultation with and representation of a licensed and experienced attorney.

3. Schedule changes for the offender, including classes, lunch period, arrival and dismissal times, locker location and extracurricular activities;
4. Notes on other disciplinary actions taken;
5. Disciplinary consequences if the offender violates the stay away agreement;
6. Dates during which the stay away agreement is valid;
7. Date when the stay away agreement will be reviewed; and
8. Signatures of parent/caregiver, accused student, and Administrator.

G. Extremely High Risk

In an abusive relationship, the frequency and severity of violence may increase over time. There is also an increased risk for violence during or after a break-up, even when a partner has not previously been violent. It is important to recognize serious incidents and threats and to be responsive to students who are having difficulty ending a relationship.

A few examples of extremely high-risk behaviors that warrant a higher level of attention include:

1. Threats or attempts to choke or strangle;
2. Threats or attempts to hurt self or others;
3. Incidents or threats involving a weapon;
4. Forced sexual contact;
5. Incidents of physical violence against people and/or animals; and
6. Constant or violent jealousy.

When incidents involve these high risk behaviors, targeted students are at increased risk for harm. Accused students engaging in abusive behavior may also be at increased risk for self-harm, suicide, homicide, and other destructive behaviors. Convey your concern about the seriousness of these behaviors and your legal responsibility to involve parents/caregivers, other school personnel and potentially law enforcement. Help parents/caregivers of both students to access support services at school in the community. Encourage students and their families to call 911 if they believe they or another person is in immediate danger. Provide information about local hotlines as well as the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: 866-331-9474 and www.loveisrespect.org.



■ APPENDIX D: DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS UNDER TITLE IX

I. Right to be Free From Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Schools that receive federal funds can be liable under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 for failing to adequately respond to abusive behavior against students. Title IX guarantees that “[n]o person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”⁷⁶ Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Such harassment consists of unwelcome sexual conduct including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.⁷⁷ Sexual violence is an extreme form of sexual harassment. Teen dating violence can be a form of sexual harassment because it often involves unwelcome touching, sexual demands, verbal abuse and physical coercion of a sexual nature.

II. School Liability for Teen Dating Violence

School districts are liable for student-on-student sexual harassment and acts of teen dating violence that constitute sexual harassment, when: (1) a student has been sexually harassed; (2) the school has actual knowledge of the harassment; (3) the harassment was severe, pervasive and objectively offensive; (4) the harassment caused the student to be deprived of access to educational opportunities or benefits; and (5) the school is deliberately indifferent to the harassment.⁷⁸

Deliberate indifference is found in two circumstances. First, a school district that fails to affirmatively act to protect students can be found to be deliberately indifferent.⁷⁹ Second, a school district that knows or reasonably should know that its actions to protect students are ineffective or inadequate can be found to be deliberately indifferent.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a) (2007).

⁷⁷ 5 C.C.R. § 4916(a) (2007).

⁷⁸ *Davis v. Monroe County Bd of Ed.*, 526 U.S. 629, 651 (1999) (The United States Supreme Court has held that a student who is subjected to sexual harassment by another student can sue a school district to recover monetary damages arising from the district’s failure to respond to student-on-student sexual harassment.)

⁷⁹ *Doe v. Petaluma City Sch. Dist.*, 949 F. Supp. 1415, 1426 (N.D. Cal. 1996).

⁸⁰ *Monteiro v. Tempe Union High Sch. Dist.*, 158 F.3d 1022, 1034 (9th Cir. 1998); See 34 C.F.R. § 106.31(b) (2007).; *Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties*, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (January 2001) at 12; *Vance v. Spencer County Public Sch. Dist.*, 231 F.3d 253, 261 (6th Cir. 2000).

III. Required School District Policies and Protocols

Title IX regulations require that each educational institution have a written policy and protocol for responding to sexual harassment.⁸¹ Failure to adopt and implement policies on sexual harassment and teen dating violence that qualifies as sexual harassment exposes school districts to civil liability under Title IX.⁸²

A. Duty to Provide Equal Protection of the Laws

The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment mandates that no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of the laws, “which is essentially a direction that all persons similarly situated should be treated alike.”⁸³ Federal courts have held that a school district’s deliberate indifference to peer sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, can constitute evidence that the district violated a student’s constitutional rights under the Equal Protection Clause.⁸⁴ Therefore, failing to respond to teen dating violence that qualifies as sexual harassment exposes school districts and their officials to civil liability under the Equal Protection Clause.⁸⁵

B. Duty to Train Employees on Sexual Harassment Policies

School districts can be liable for failing to train employees on sexual harassment and acts of teen dating violence that constitute sexual harassment. Federal courts have held that school districts have a legal duty to train employees when (1) the need for training is obvious; and (2) it is highly foreseeable that a student’s constitutional rights will be violated if the district fails to conduct such training.⁸⁶

C. Duty to Promote School Safety

School districts that receive funds under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act, must have a plan that promotes school safety.⁸⁷ Because abusive behavior poses serious safety concerns, school safety plans should include abusive behavior.

D. Duty to Track Teen Dating Violence

In addition, school districts that receive Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Act funds must track incidents of violence and crime on campus which includes tracking incidences of abusive behavior that occur on campus. Each state must forward this information to the United States Department of Education on an annual basis.⁸⁸

⁸¹ See 34 C.F.R. § 106.31 (2007).

⁸² There are no national guidelines regarding Title IX and teen dating violence. Please note that not all teen dating violence qualifies as sexual harassment under the law.

⁸³ *City of Cleburne v. Cleburne Living Ctr.*, 473 U.S. 432, 439 (1985) (internal quotations and citations omitted).

⁸⁴ *Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified Sch. Dist.*, 324 F.3d 1130, 1135 (9th Cir. 2003).

⁸⁵ *Annamaria M. v. Napa Valley Unified Sch. Dist.*, 2006 WL 1525733 (N.D. Cal. 2006) (citing *Flores*, 324 F.3d at 1135).

⁸⁶ *Plumeau v. School Dist. No. 40*, 130 F.3d 432, 439 n.4 (9th Cir. 1997); *Flores*, 324 F.3d at 1136.

⁸⁷ 20 U.S.C. § 7161(3)(B) (2007).

⁸⁸ 20 U.S.C. §§ 7102, 7132 (2007).

E. Unsafe School Choice Option

The Unsafe School Choice Option of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires that each state that receives federal funding offers to the parents/caregivers of each student who attends a “persistently dangerous” public school, or “who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense” while on school grounds the option to attend a safe public school.⁸⁹ This requirement permits victims to transfer to another school after experiencing an on-campus violent or threatening incident of teen dating violence or sexual violence.

F. Notice of Policy

To ensure notice of the school district’s building healthy relationships policy, the policy shall be published in all school and school district handbooks or other publications on the school’s or school district’s website that sets forth the rules, procedures or standards of conduct for students at school. A summary of the learning goals of the policy along with the name of the designated Prevention Coordinator(s) and Prevention Liaison shall be posted in each classroom.

Each school district shall inform all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, students and parents/caregivers, of the school district’s healthy relationships policy and the protocol on how parents/caregivers and students can file complaints. Upon request, the school district shall provide the parents/caregivers with the school district’s healthy relationships policy and relevant information. The District will treat the *School and District Policies to Increase School Safety and Improve School Climate: Promoting Healthy Relationships and Preventing Teen Dating Violence* as living documents that will be updated annually to ensure its continued relevance to the District and its schools. At a minimum, they will be reviewed as other disciplinary policies are updated.

To raise awareness about the policy, the district, an individual school, school club, student government, or classroom can disseminate the policy through regular outreach efforts as well as through creative strategies specifically designed to engage youth and the school community. Schools can also incorporate dissemination of this policy into their school wide approach to violence prevention.

G. Community Reporting

Schools shall distribute an annual campus safety report to the community that will be used to evaluate the policy. It will include:

1. Summary of the school employee training and student prevention education efforts; and
2. Aggregate data on the incidence, types and prevalence of abusive behavior.

Administrators may use additional means to evaluate changes in school climate and culture as a result of this policy, such as annual surveys related to school environment and safety.

⁸⁹ 20 U.S.C. § 7912 (a) (2007).



TEEN DATING VIOLENCE REPORT

Date of Report: _____ Person Making Report: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____ Location: _____

Targeted Student: _____ Grade _____ Class _____

Accused Student: _____ Grade _____ Class _____

Witnesses: _____

Description of the incident:

Please submit this report to _____ within 24 hours of reporting the incident.

INVESTIGATION/PROCEDURE

Met with Witness

Signature: _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Met with Targeted Student

Signature: _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Met with Accused Student

Signature: _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Mediated conference with both students

Signature: _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Contacted Parent/Caregiver of both students **Signature:** _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Contacted: _____

Briefing Principal and involved staff

Signature: _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Contacted Police Department (if necessary) **Signature:** _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Entered into Reporting System (paper/online) **Signature:** _____

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Recommended follow-up steps and deadline dates:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Adapted from Guidance Counselor Angelica Ferreras' form used at Bronx, NY middle school MS 331.

**STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM FOR REPORTING
BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT,
DATING VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Grade: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____ School: _____

Please answer the following questions about the most serious incident:

List the name of the accused perpetrator(s) of bullying, sexual harassment, dating violence, or sexual violence:

Relationship between you and the accused perpetrator:

Describe the incident:

When and where did it happen? _____

Were there any witnesses? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, who? _____

Is this the first incident? ☐ yes ☐ no

If no, how many times has it happened before? _____

Other information, including previous incidents or threats:

Student or parent/caregiver declines to complete this form:

Initial: _____ Date: _____

I certify that all statements made in the complaint are true and complete. Any intentional misstatement of fact will subject me to appropriate discipline. I authorize school officials to disclose the information I provide only as necessary in pursuing the investigation.

Signatures

Student: _____ **Date:** _____

School official receiving complaint: _____ **Date:** _____

School official conducting follow-up: _____ **Date:** _____

Notes of actions taken:

Additional information from student or staff

Date Documentation/Follow-Up Signature of Student/Staff

From "A Guide to Addressing Teen Dating Violence in Texas Schools".
Adapted from original forms developed by Austin Independent School District.

SCHOOL-BASED STAY-AWAY AGREEMENT
BULLYING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT,
DATING VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The intent of this agreement is to increase safety for students who have been the targets of severe or repeated bullying, sexual harassment, dating violence, or sexual violence. It is to be administered in a conference with the accused student and his/her parent/caregiver.

Name of targeted student: _____

Date of most serious incident: _____

Description of behaviors involved in incident:

Date of assessment: _____

Date of parent/caregiver notification: _____

In order to protect the rights and safety of all members of our school community, you are required to stay away from (name of targeted student)

at all times during the school day and at any school-sponsored event. This means that you may not approach, talk to, sit by, or have any contact with (name of targeted student)

at school or on school property, school buses, and bus stops. In addition, the following actions are effective immediately:

Arrival/Departure

Time: _____ Entrance: _____

Bus/Parking: _____

Current Schedule New Schedule

Lunch: _____

Locker: _____

Extracurricular Activities: _____

Other disciplinary actions: _____

Violations of this agreement and acts of retaliation directly or indirectly toward the targeted student or the student's friends or family members will be taken seriously and will result in further disciplinary actions. Your compliance will be monitored by

(Name and staff title): _____ .

Agreement is valid from _____ **to** _____ .

Date

This agreement will be reviewed on _____ .

Date

Signatures

Student: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Caregiver: _____ **Date:** _____

Administrator: _____ **Date:** _____

cc: Principal * Assistant Principal * Counselor * School Resource Officer

Adapted from "A Guide to Addressing Teen Dating Violence in Texas Schools "and Austin Independent School District.

SAFETY PLAN

TARGETED STUDENT NAME _____ GRADE _____ H.R. _____

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF _____

A safety plan should be considered when a student discloses dating violence and abuse, whether or not a Restraining Order/No Contact Order has been issued by the court.

Administrative staff should develop this plan with the targeted student, in an effort to empower him/her and keep him/her safe. A safety plan needs to be individualized, as every student has unique needs and challenges.

1. Any Schedule Changes Made (attach revised schedule) School should consider who will notify the teachers, what if there's only one AP English course in the school and both parties take the course?

2. School Arrival (change in time, entrance, transportation, with whom, etc.)

3. Locker (Is there a gym locker as well? How will the student access their locker e.g. five minutes early?)

4. Lunch (Is the cafeteria safe? Can the targeted student experience retaliation from friends of the accused student? Can the eating schedule be changed? Who will alert cafeteria staff of the order?)

5. Route Changes (include places to avoid/watch for, after school activities and team schedules, travel to and from school, class, etc.)

6. School Departure (*time, entrance, designated friend, etc.*)

7. Staff: *Let the targeted student select one staff member with whom they feel comfortable. This staff person should be available for student for "check-ins" and support as needed.*

Support Staff: _____

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8. Additional Staff to Share Plan With (Administrators, Teachers, Guidance Counselors, Resource Officer, Lunch Aides, Bus Driver, Coaches, School Nurse, etc.):

9. Support Network of Peers (to accompany targeted student throughout the day if necessary):

10. Strategies to Problem Solve: Have the targeted student think through different ways s/he will react and deal with emergency situations, where they would go? Who would they call? Consider strategies to assess dangerousness, threats, etc.

11. Any Additional Special Conditions: Are there other extracurricular school activities/events which present conflicts? How are they to be addressed?

School has completed the Restraining Order/ No Contact Order School Checklist.

From the Rhode Island Board of Education "Guide to Preventing Bullying, Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Violence in Rhode Island Schools". Developed by the office of the Essex County District Attorney Kevin Burke.

CHART OF RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR⁹⁰

The purpose of this chart is to provide administrators with examples of actions and consequences that may be appropriate given certain violations. While discipline must be consistent, we strongly recommend against the rigid enforcement of any discipline plan including the one below. Rather, we encourage schools to frequently monitor the effectiveness of those supports to determine whether (a) the intervention is working and is no longer needed; (b) the intervention is working and should be continued; or (c) the intervention is not working and therefore a different (and perhaps more intensive) intervention should be implemented. Data are used to guide these decisions. Interventions are commensurate to a student's demonstrated need and should be changed or intensified if they are found ineffective.

Offensive Action	Consequences	Contact Administrator	Contact Parent/Caregiver	Referral
Verbal, Nonverbal, Written, Emotional or Psychological Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of put-downs, insults, name-calling, swearing, or offensive language • Screaming or yelling at another • Making threats, being intimidating or urging friends to threaten or scare another student 	First Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning • Education, teaching positive behavioral expectations 	May Inform	May Inform	If appropriate, dating violence prevention counselor or other violence prevention counselor
	Repeat Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher student conference • Social skills classes, individualized behavior interventions • Send to office/ Detention 	Inform	Inform	Dating violence prevention counselor or other violence prevention counselor

⁹⁰ Adapted from Massachusetts Department of Education, *Sample Written Policy Chart* www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/tdv/guidelines/policy.html.

Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, punching, pinching, pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping, kicking, chocking, pulling hair, biting, throwing things, arm twisting • Intimidation, blocking exits, punching walls, knocking things around • Damaging or destroying another's property • Restraining, pinning someone to the wall, blocking their movements 	First Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detention / Education / In-school Suspension • Must Inform Parent/ Caregiver • Conference 	Must Inform	Parent/Caregiver Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dating violence prevention counselor or other • Violence prevention counselor • School security • Police
	Repeat Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detention plus Diversion Program • Suspension • Dangerousness • Assessment 	Must Inform	Parent/Caregiver Conference	
Using Weapons	Suspension	Must Inform	Must Inform	Police
Stalking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension • Mental Health intervention 	Must Inform	Must Inform	Police
Sexual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling, such as slut, bitch, fag • Cat calls or whistling • Spreading sexual gossip or graffiti • Comments about a person's body or unwanted verbal or written sexual comments • Staring or leering with sexual overtones, sexual gestures 	First Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detention / Suspension • Education 	Must Inform	Parent/Caregiver Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment counselor • Dating violence prevention counselor or • rape prevention counselor • School Security • Police
	Repeat Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension • Psychological • Assessment 	Must Inform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must Inform Parent/ Caregiver • Conference before admittance to new school or re-admittance 	
Forcing obscene materials on others	Suspension	Must Inform	Must Inform	Police
Pulling off or lifting clothes to expose private parts	Suspension	Must Inform	Must Inform	Police
Rape or attempted rape	Suspension	Must Inform	Must Inform	Police

SCORECARD

MEASURING IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL POLICY TO INCREASE STUDENT SAFETY

Goals	Not Yet Established 1	In Progress 2	Partially in Place 3	Fully in Place 4
<p>Positive and welcoming school climate</p> <p>1. All district and school-based employees define and promote mutual respect, healthy communication and acceptance among students, staff and the school community.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral expectations are established through codes of conduct and are posted, taught and modeled. • Students and staff can articulate behavioral expectations and explain their meaning. • Regular communications and activities engage students, staff, parents/caregivers and school community as evidenced by letters to parents/caregivers, website content and resources made available by school and community partners. • School environment is welcoming and encourages a positive school identity and culture. • The school respects the diversity among staff, students and their families as contributing to a school culture of connectedness. • Students, staff, parents/caregivers and community members have opportunities to participate in shaping school policy. • Administrators discuss with and engage staff in all aspects of the policy to promote healthy relationships and prevent teen dating violence. • School employees respond quickly to incidents of derogatory or discriminatory language among students. 				

Goals	Not Yet Established 1	In Progress 2	Partially in Place 3	Fully in Place 4
<p>Professional development about healthy relationships</p> <p>2. The district provides specific training for all school employees and encourages employees to increase their knowledge of and ability to respond to abusive behavior among students.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District has designated a Prevention Coordinator who is responsible for implementing the policy and integrating it into existing policies and programs. • Each school has designated a Prevention Liaison who receives specialized annual training and is provided an opportunity to train faculty and staff at least annually. • Targeted annual trainings are mandated for administrators, teachers, behavioral health professionals, coaches and school safety officers. • School staff is trained on how to promote healthy relationships and respond to unhealthy or abusive behaviors. • The district partners with community-based organizations to provide annual trainings to school employees. • The district allows approved community-based organizations to promote additional training opportunities and provides space for trainings. 				
<p>Prevention education for students</p> <p>3. The district educates students about healthy relationships and the prevention of abusive behavior.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricula in a range of subjects incorporate youth development, resiliency and prevention lessons. • Students are provided multiple exposures to curricula about healthy relationships and prevention of abusive behaviors. • The district partners with community-based organizations to offer additional education programs for students, both during the school day and after school. • Teachers take advantage of opportunities to incorporate prevention education and healthy relationship lessons into all lessons. 				

Goals	Not Yet Established 1	In Progress 2	Partially in Place 3	Fully in Place 4
<p>Parent/Caregiver engagement in teen dating violence prevention</p> <p>4. The district engages parents/caregivers in their prevention efforts and provides educational programming targeted to parents/caregivers.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the beginning of the school year, parents/caregivers are provided with a description of the violence prevention program and the name of the district's Prevention Coordinator and the school's Prevention Liaison. The names of the Prevention Coordinator and Prevention Liaisons are sent to parents/caregivers at the beginning of each school year. • The Prevention Coordinator and Prevention Liaison are available to speak to parents/caregivers at school open houses and events. • The school or district provides educational workshops for parents/caregivers at least once per school year on topics related to promotion of healthy relationships and prevention of abusive behavior. • District administrators work closely with parents' organizations to keep parents/caregivers informed of the school's prevention work. 				
<p>Response plan for early warning signs of abusive behavior</p> <p>5. The district and all school employees have a plan of action to respond quickly and appropriately to early warning signs of abusive behavior.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School has worked with community organizations to develop a referral system. • School employees receive training on early warning signs of teen dating violence, bullying, sexual harassment and other abusive or violent behavior. • School employees use data as indicators of effectiveness of programs and trends in positive and negative behaviors. • The district notifies all school employees of the protocol for responding to early warning signs. • School employees utilize a variety of intervention methods tailored to the needs of individual students. • Prevention Liaisons are knowledgeable about community resources and refer students to community-based organizations when appropriate. • Prevention Liaisons and Administrators communicate regularly about early interventions that occur on campus and the need for future interventions. 				

Goals	Not Yet Established 1	In Progress 2	Partially in Place 3	Fully in Place 4
<p>Response plan for serious incidents of abusive behavior</p> <p>6. The district and all school employees respond quickly and appropriately to serious incidents of abusive behavior on campus.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has clear, strong enforcement protocols and all staff is trained to respond to incidents of violence. • The district has established a protocol for responding to serious incidents of abusive behavior on campus, including documentation of incidents, intervention during incidents, investigation of incidents and referrals to law enforcement, when necessary. • The district has a clear and well-publicized student complaint procedure, including age-appropriate complaint forms and assistance filling out forms. • School employees receive training on intervening in incidents of abusive behavior and working with targeted students and accused students. • The district has a policy on Upstanders, including disciplinary consequences. 				
<p>Provision of resources and referrals</p> <p>7. The district and all school employees provide accessible resources for targeted students.</p> <p><i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district has a well-publicized accommodations protocol. • The district works with students holding civil protection orders to enforce their orders on school grounds. • Targeted students of abusive behavior are guaranteed rights in any disciplinary hearing against their offender while incorporating safety measures to protect the targeted student • Prevention Liaisons are knowledgeable about community resources and refer students to community-based organizations when appropriate. 				

Goals	Not Yet Established 1	In Progress 2	Partially in Place 3	Fully in Place 4
Public notification of policy 8. The district notifies students and parents/caregivers of the district's healthy relationships policy. <i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district distributes a copy of the healthy relationships policy to parents/caregivers at the beginning of every school year using methods that will reach the most people. • The district notifies students, using age-appropriate methods, of the healthy relationships policy at the beginning of every school year. • The healthy relationships policy is included in all student handbooks or similar publications. • Information on the policy, including the name(s) of the school's Prevention Liaison(s) is posted in every classroom. • The healthy relationships policy is reviewed regularly, on the same schedule as other disciplinary policies. 				
Annual safety report 9. The district produces and distributes an annual campus safety report that includes school climate survey results. <i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators track the number and type of incidents of abusive behavior on campus. • Administrators track the number and type of student complaints and requests for accommodation. • In-school youth surveys include questions on protective factors and resiliency factors and those results are shared with the community. • Administrators, the Prevention Coordinator and Prevention Liaisons track the district's school employee trainings and student prevention education programs. 				
Collaboration with community organizations 10. The district works in partnership with local community organizations to provide a comprehensive response to abusive behavior among students. <i>A four means that the following practices are in place:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prevention Coordinator and Prevention Liaisons maintain a current list of approved national or local community-based organizations with expertise on teen dating violence, bullying, sexual harassment and other abusive or violent behavior. • The district utilizes approved community-based organizations to provide school employee trainings, student prevention programs and referrals. 				



■ APPENDIX F: DEFINITIONS⁹¹

Definitions referring to the threats or acts of abusive behavior are below, but the District's discipline code may instead focus on remediation of specific behaviors, including a pattern of such behaviors. The larger goal of providing these definitions to schools is to positively impact their climate and culture and to improve students' educational and developmental experiences.

Abusive Behavior: Intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and/or electronic abuse against a peer or intimate partner, including bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and dating violence.

Accommodation: A change or modification to a student's school enrollment, participation or environment, which increases access to meaningful education or safety for a student who is experiencing abuse or violence.

Accused Student: An individual who is accused of or has committed any act or threat of abusive behavior as defined in this policy.

Bullying: A form of aggression where one or more children repeatedly and intentionally intimidate, harass, or physically harm a victim who is perceived as unable to defend herself or himself. Bullying begins early in life with peers and if unchecked can graduate into teen dating violence in adolescence, so preventing bullying can also have a positive impact on teen dating violence. Moreover, behavior that appears to be bullying is often related to romantic relationships (competing for the same boy, pressure to adopt hetero-normative behaviors), so the context of the behavior is key to offering appropriate intervention.

Electronic Abuse: Behavior used to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, harass, monitor, coerce, stalk or victimize, except as otherwise permitted by law, that is perpetrated through the internet, social networking sites, spyware or global positioning system (GPS) tracking technology, telephone or cellular telephone, instant or text messages, email, blogs, websites, forums and mailing lists. Electronic abuse, which can include behavior seen as cyberbullying, is not limited to, unwanted, repeated calls or text messages, non-consensual access to email, social networking accounts, texts or cell phone call logs and pressuring for and/or disseminating private or embarrassing pictures, videos, or other personal information including nude, semi-nude images or sexually explicit messages (sexting).

The jurisdiction of the District policy limits electronic abuse through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on a school bus or the use of computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the XYZ District. The policy governs

⁹¹ Policy elements should be matched to local, state, and federal law. Some of these definitions may differ by state.

electronic abuse off school property when such behavior can be demonstrated to negatively affect the educational process or to endanger the health, safety, morality or welfare of the school community.

Dating Partner: Any person, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, involved in a relationship with another person, where the relationship is primarily characterized by social contact of a sexual or romantic nature, whether casual, serious, short-term, long-term, or as defined by either person.

Prevention Coordinator: District-level individual responsible for overseeing prevention efforts that may include bullying, electronic abuse and drug abuse. The coordinator works with School Prevention Liaisons at each school to implement prevention goals.

Prevention Liaison: School-level individual responsible for Title IX and/or other violence and drug prevention efforts. The Liaison may facilitate training for school personnel and educational activities for youth, work with colleagues when a student exhibits early warning signs of being a targeted student or accused student, provide a specialized response to abusive behavior on campus, act as a liaison between the school and students who are experiencing abusive behavior and act as a liaison to community resources and law enforcement.

Protection Order: A civil or criminal court order issued in any jurisdiction for the protection of a victim of dating violence or sexual violence that restricts the conduct of an individual toward the victim.

School Climate:⁹² Refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students', parents/caregivers' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.

A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate is one in which:

- People are supported by norms, values and expectations that engender a feeling of social, emotional and physical safety;
- People are engaged and respected;
- Students, families and educators work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision;
- Educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
- Each person contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.



Sexual Harassment: Harassment that is severe, pervasive and objectively offensive and that can be said to deprive the victims of access to the educational opportunities or benefits provided by the school.

Student-to-student sexual harassment is conduct and/or communication by a student directed against another student. It consists of unwelcome and uninvited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors,

⁹² School Climate is a term developed by the National School Climate Council and used by the National School Climate Center (formerly, the Center for Social and Emotional Education), www.schoolclimate.org/climate/learning.

sexually motivated physical conduct and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature, which is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to:

- Substantially interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program, school-sponsored activity or any other aspect of a student's education;
- Create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating school environment; and/or
- Otherwise adversely affect a student's educational opportunities.

Such behavior can constitute sexual harassment regardless of the gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity of any of the students involved.

Sexually harassing behavior may take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Engaging in physical conduct of a sexual nature such as patting, pinching, grabbing and/or brushing up against another person in a sexual way;
- Making sexual comments, remarks, insults, and/or jokes;
- Displaying or distributing sexually oriented or suggestive objects, pictures, drawings or making obscene gestures;
- Pressuring for sexual activity;
- Spreading rumors of a sexual nature; and/or
- Engaging in sexually violent or coercive behavior (assault, rape).

Sexual Violence: Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise control a person's sexuality using coercion, force and/or duress, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim. This policy does not cover sexual violence by a stranger.

Stalking: Conduct that would cause a reasonable person to: (1) fear for his or her safety or the safety of a third person; or (2) suffer emotional distress. This conduct could include, but is not limited to the following: unwanted phone calls, texts or emails; vandalism and monitoring a victim's habits and whereabouts.

Targeted Student: The student who is experiencing abusive behavior as defined in this policy.

Teen Dating Violence: The use of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, or electronic abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a relationship of a romantic or intimate nature, regardless of whether that relationship is continuing or has concluded Also may be defined by the terms "adolescent relationship abuse" or "adolescent dating abuse."

Victim: A person who has been a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual violence, or stalking.

Upstander⁹³ ("Positive Bystander"): A student or adult who witnesses or is aware of an incident of abusive behavior and intervenes safely or seeks help for the victim/targeted student. The intervention

⁹³ An 'Upstander' is a term used by the National School Climate Center (formerly, the Center for Social and Emotional Education): www.schoolclimate.org/bullybust/upstanderbehavior.php.

can take many forms and can take place both online and in person. An Upstander makes comments or expresses disapproval of harmful actions that help defuse the situation by talking to others, expressing care to the target and to others, helping remove the target from the group of aggressors or finding an authority figure to intervene. Upstanders can gain substantial power by joining together to take constructive action. After an incident, Upstanders can talk to their peers about why the incident was wrong, ask people to stop rumors and reach out periodically to the target to see if she/he is safe physically, mentally, and emotionally.





■ APPENDIX G: ONLINE RESOURCES

I. Teen Dating Violence

Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships **StartStrong.FuturesWithoutViolence.org/**

Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships (Start Strong) was a national initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in collaboration with Futures Without Violence, formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Blue Shield of California Foundation invested in 11 Start Strong communities across the country to identify and evaluate the best practices in prevention to stop teen dating violence and abuse before it starts. It was the largest funded national initiative aimed at preventing relationship violence and abuse among young people by promoting healthy relationship behaviors.

www.startstrongparents.org/

This website provides advice to parents/caregivers about how to talk to their teens, especially younger teens, about healthy relationships and teen dating violence. Information is also provided in Spanish.

Love Is Respect **www.loveisrespect.org**

866-331-9474
866-331-8453 TTY

Loveisrespect.org is the online home of the National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline. The helpline offers one-on-one service from trained peer advocates and is specifically designed for teens and young adults. The helpline operates 24 hours a day through live chat, text or phone and offers translation services. The website also includes resources for teens, parents/caregivers, friends and family, peer advocates, government officials, law enforcement officials and the general public.

American Academy of Pediatrics: Connected Kids: Safe, Strong, Secure **www.aap.org/ConnectedKids/**

AAP's Connected Kids offers child healthcare providers a comprehensive, logistical approach to integrating violence prevention efforts in practice and the community. A program for use in well-child visits for all children from birth to age 21, Connected Kids includes a clinical guide and 21 handouts for parents/caregivers and teens on topics such as bullying, discipline, interpersonal skills, parenting, suicide and television violence.

American Bar Association: Division for Public Education **http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/initiatives_awards/national_teen_dating_violence_prevention_initiative.html**

In an effort to bring more public awareness to a problem confronting today's teens, the American Bar Association's National Teen Dating Violence Prevention Initiative developed and distributed teen dating violence awareness and prevention toolkits. On their website, you will find this toolkit along with a variety of materials on teen dating violence and recommendations for parents/caregivers, school personnel, health and mental health professionals, the legal and law enforcement community and domestic violence agencies. Toolkit elements can be integrated into curricular or extracurricular programming plans.

American Psychiatric Association: *Love Doesn't Have to Hurt - Teens*

www.apa.org/pi/cyf/teen.pdf

Developed by the American Psychological Association with consultation from the Partners in Program Planning in Adolescent Health (PIPPAH), the *Love Doesn't Have to Hurt - Teens* Brochure provides information and resources for victims, aggressors and friends. It includes tips for addressing difficult situations and discussion of issues particular to disabled youth, same-sex relationships and cultural beliefs.

Break the Cycle

www.breakthecycle.org

Break the Cycle is a national organization focused on engaging, educating and empowering youth to build lives and communities free of domestic violence. They have countless resources for parents/caregivers, educators, policymakers and advocates, including a comprehensive list of state laws and School Policy Through a Survivor Lens, Responding to Disclosures of Abuse and Safety Planning with Teens. Break the Cycle also maintains a site for National Teen Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, www.teenDVmonth.org, and has launched Respect WORKS!, www.respect-works.org.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – National Center for Injury Prevention & Control (NCIPC) – Division of Violence Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/index.html>

This website has a large collection of publications, fact sheets, and materials for youth serving agencies, schools, public health programs, parents, and teens including PSA's. NCIPC is a resource for research on youth violence prevention and intervention. The CDC recently unveiled *DATING MATTERS*, a free online course available to educators, school personnel, youth leaders and other working to improve the health of teens. The CDC is also leading **Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)** which encourages the community to get involved in preventing youth violence before it starts. **STRYVE Online** (http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/stryve/making_most_stryve.html) is an interactive youth violence prevention resource center with an up-to-date set of tools to plan, carry out, and evaluate sustainable youth violence prevention strategies that are based upon the best available evidence.

Love is Not Abuse

www.loveisnotabuse.com

Love is Not Abuse is a step-by step guide to teaching high school students about the issue of teen dating violence. Using literature and poetry, this program provides teachers with the tools to teach about this sensitive subject and is intended to be taught in either Health or English/Language Arts classes.

Men Can Stop Rape

www.mencanstoprape.org

Men Can Stop Rape (MCSR) is an international organization that mobilizes male youth to prevent men's violence against women. MCSR builds young men's capacity to challenge harmful aspects of traditional masculinity, value alternative visions of male strength and embrace their vital role as allies with women and girls in fostering healthy relationships and gender equity. MCSR resources include their primary prevention program for male youth, "Men of Strength (MOST)", as well as their public education campaign, "Strength Mediaworks" and their leadership training for youth service professionals, organizations and schools.

National Center for Victims of Crime - Youth Initiative

<http://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/youth-initiative>

The National Center for Victims of Crime is an advocacy organization providing resources for crime victims and those who serve them. Their youth initiative builds the nation's capacity to support youth victims while working to advance their rights and ensuring youth leadership on issues that affect youth. The resource center includes a bulletin on Teen Dating Violence at <http://victimsofcrime.org/help-for-crime-victims/get-help-bulletins-for-crime-victims/bulletins-for-teens/dating-violence> (scroll down for text) that explains how to recognize teen dating violence and get help for yourself or a friend.

Office on Violence Against Women
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/1is2many>

The mission of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is to provide federal leadership in reducing violence against women, strengthening services to and administering justice for all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Through their *Teen Dating Violence Prevention Project* (www.teendvmonth.org), coordinated by Break the Cycle, they work to bring national focus to the issue of teen dating violence, highlight the need to educate youth about healthy relationships, raise awareness among those who care for them and provide communities with a critical opportunity to work together to prevent this devastating cycle of abuse. The website includes a listing of national and local campaigns designed to raise awareness, teen dating violence factsheets, and a variety of materials around policy, curricula, and programming and help resources.

WomensLaw.org
www.womenslaw.org

WomensLaw.org is a project of [National Network to End Domestic Violence](#), providing legal information and support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

II. Bullying

StopBullying.gov
www.stopbullying.gov

This website provides information from various government agencies on [what bullying is](#), [what cyberbullying is](#), [who is at risk](#), and how you can [prevent](#) and [respond to bullying](#).

BullyBust
<http://www.schoolclimate.org/bullybust/>

BullyBust: Promoting a Community of Upstanders is nationwide bully prevention awareness effort launched by the National School Climate Center in 2009 to address bullying incidences effectively and create a culture of Upstanders inside and out of school. It is designed to help both students and adults become “Upstanders”—people who stand up to bullying and become part of the solution to end harmful harassment, teasing, and violence in schools. BullyBust promotes valuable free supports with targeted school-wide and classroom-based efforts including research-based resources for students, parents/caregivers, and educators.

III. Electronic Abuse

A Thin Line
www.athinline.org

A Thin Line is a campaign developed by MTV to empower youth to identify, respond to, and stop the spread of digital abuse in their lives and amongst their peers. The website includes facts about boundary-defying activities, a space for you to ask questions and/or share your story, information on how to support others and resources where you can get help.

ThatsNotCool.com
www.thatsnotcool.com

That’s Not Cool is a national public education campaign designed to prevent teen dating violence. Developed by Futures Without Violence, formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund, in partnership with the Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women and the Advertising Council, That’s Not Cool uses digital examples of controlling behavior online and by cell phone to encourage teens to draw their own line about what is, or is not, acceptable relationship behavior. That’s Not Cool has launched a new campaign tools website (www.thatsnotcool.com/tools) for anyone to use in their community to prevent teen dating violence. It includes all campaign marketing materials as well as background information and instructional documents for immediate download and use.

IV. Prevention Education

Committee for Children

<http://www.cfchildren.org/advocacy/about-us.aspx>

Committee for Children is a non-profit that has developed and published programs and curricula around social skills, bullying, and sexual abuse for children from preschool through middle school. They've also developed an emergent literacy program for young children. *SECOND STEP* (<http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step.aspx>) is their violence prevention program that integrates social and emotional learning with academics. The website features a program overview, research findings and a variety of resources such as their toolkits that include teacher guides, lessons, posters and interactive DVDs.

Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM)

www.coaches-corner.org

The Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) campaign (developed by Futures Without Violence, formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund) invites men to be part of the solution by teaching boys that violence never equals strength. CBIM engages coaches through the Coaches Leadership Program to help shape the attitudes and behaviors of young male athletes encouraging them to practice respect towards themselves and others. The *Coaches Corner* website provides coaches with access to program materials (i.e. playbook, toolkit, etc.) and tips from fellow coaches on how to implement the program in their own communities.

Expect Respect

www.safeplace.org/expectrespect

Expect Respect is built on an ecological, trauma-informed model and offers a comprehensive prevention program for youth in middle and high schools and has 3 primary program components: 1) support boys and girls who have been exposed to violence, 2) mobilize youth as leaders and 3) engage schools, parents and community organizations in creating safe and healthy environments. The Program Manual includes a 24-session support group curriculum, 8-session youth leadership training, guidelines for school-wide prevention including school policy, CDC's Choose Respect materials for educating students, teachers and parents, and other resources.

Fourth R/Strategies for Healthy Youth Relationships

www.youthrelationships.org

Strategies for Healthy Youth Relationships is a consortium of researchers and professionals dedicated to promoting healthy adolescent relationships and reducing risk behaviors. Their *Fourth R* curriculum is a comprehensive school-based prevention program designed to include students, teachers, parents/caregivers and the community in reducing violence and risk behaviors. It uses best practice approaches to target multiple forms of violence, including bullying, dating violence, peer violence and group violence. The curriculum is rigorously evaluated and found to be highly effective.

Respect WORKS!

www.respect-works.org

Respect WORKS! is a unique partnership launched between Hazelden and Break the Cycle. The Hazelden Foundation, the leading publisher of evidence-based violence prevention programs and Break the Cycle have joined forces to create a comprehensive model of teen dating violence prevention programming. Together they are offering resources and training that will help schools and community organizations address all aspects of this serious issue.

Safe Dates Prevention Program

www.hazelden.org/web/go/safedates

Safe Dates is an evidence-based curriculum being implemented and evaluated under Start Strong in several communities in an effort to prevent teen dating violence and abuse. Rigorous research shows that *Safe Dates* is effective in both preventing dating violence and in reducing dating violence among teens already using violence against their dates. It also meets many of the national standards for health education and life skills.

True Child

www.truechild.org

TrueChild is an action tank of leading experts that promotes gender transformative approaches to gender-based violence such as teen dating violence, reproductive health, civic engagement, and educational achievement. The website offers information, research and resources on how gender stereotypes affect children with facts and resources for parents/caregivers and educators.

V. LGBTQ

Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project

www.avp.org

Hotline: (212) 714-1141 (operates 24/7)

AVP works with LGBTQH people dealing with domestic violence and provides counseling and advocacy services, safety planning and documentation of the violence. In addition, AVP offers support groups for victims, assists in obtaining orders of protection and helps locate shelters and emergency housing options.

GLBT National Help Center

<http://www.glbtnationalhelpcenter.org/index2.html>

800-246-PRIDE

The GLBT National Youth Talkline provides telephone and email peer-counseling on relationship issues and other concerns as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States. The Talkline **operates** Monday thru Friday from 1pm to 9pm, *pacific time* (Monday thru Friday from 4pm to midnight, *eastern time*) and Saturday from 9am to 2pm, *pacific time* (Saturday from noon to 5pm, *eastern time*). **Youth can also get help through email; youth@GLBTNationalHelpCenter.org**

Show Me Love DC!

<http://showmelovedc.org/>

Show Me Love DC! is a campaign to raise awareness about healthy relationships and provide resources for LGBTQ survivors of intimate partner violence. This campaign is coordinated by **WEAVE**, guided by a Community Advisory Committee, and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. The website provides facts about prevalence and available services for LGBTQ dating violence survivors.

Survivor Project

<http://www.survivorproject.org/>

Survivor Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the needs of **intersex and trans** survivors of domestic and sexual violence through caring action, education and expanding access to resources and to opportunities for action.

Think B4 You Speak.com

<http://www.thinkb4youspeak.com/>

Think B4 You Speak.com is a campaign to raise awareness of the prevalence and consequences of anti-LGBT bias and behavior in schools and reduce and prevent the use of homophobic language in an effort to create a more positive environment for LGBT teens. The campaign also aims to reach adults, including school personnel and parents; their support of this message is crucial to the success of efforts to change behavior.

The Trevor Project

www.thetrevorproject.org

Helpline 866-488-7386

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. The organization offers a 24/7 crisis line and a free, confidential, secure online messaging service that provides live help through the website on Mondays and Fridays between the hours of 1:00 PM Pacific (4 PM Eastern) and 7:00 PM Pacific (10:00 PM Eastern). The website provides life-saving and life-affirming resources including a search engine to find local resources, a digital community and advocacy/educational programs that create a safe, supportive and positive environment.

VI. Sexual Abuse

1in6

www.1in6.org

The mission of 1in6 is to help men who have had unwanted or abusive sexual experiences in childhood live healthier, happier lives and provide information and support resources for **family members, friends, and partners** on the web and in the community. The website offers online chat support, counseling and therapy, answers to questions about recovering from childhood sexual abuse, information about medical, emotional and behavioral issues related to abusive experiences and referrals to resources.

Pandora's Project

<http://www.pandys.org/>

Pandora's Project's mission is to provide information, facilitate peer support and offer assistance to male and female survivors of sexual violence and their friends and family.

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)

www.rainn.org

800-656-HOPE (4673)

RAINN is the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. RAINN created and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE and online.rainn.org) in partnership with more than 1,100 local rape crisis centers across the country and operates the **DoD Safe Helpline** for the Department of Defense. RAINN also carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help victims and ensure that rapists are brought to justice.

VII. Mental Health

Halfofus.com

<http://www.halfofus.com/>

Half of Us, mtvU and **The Jed Foundation** are raising awareness about the prevalence of mental health issues, including stress and depression, and connecting students to the appropriate resources to get help.



For further information contact:



100 Montgomery St, The Presidio
San Francisco, CA 94129
415.678.5500

1320 19th Street, N.W., Suite 401
Washington, D.C. 20036
202.595.7384

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