TODAY’S OBJECTIVES

- Understand the prevalence of dating violence
- Learn the warning signs of dating violence
- Know what you can do to help
A CAUTION…

- We recognize that today’s topic is a sensitive one and it is likely that there are people in this room who have been personally affected by dating violence either directly or indirectly.

- The following video has re-enactments and real stories from students who have been affected by dating violence. If the content of any of today’s presentation is distressing, don’t hesitate to step out if you need to.
WHAT IS DATING VIOLENCE?

A pattern of abusive behaviors used to exert power and control over a dating partner. Abuse includes any words or actions meant to control or hurt another person.
WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

A pattern of coercive behavior by one partner over another when a couple is living together that can include physical, emotional, financial, sexual, verbal and psychological abuse to gain power and control over an intimate partner.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- 1 in 5 adolescent girls are the victim of dating violence (TAASA Survey, 2005)

- Four million American women experience a serious assault by a partner during an average year. (Ending Violence Against Women, Dec 1999)

- 75% of abused partners are harassed at work by their intimate partners. (US DOJ, May 2000)

- 40% of victims of severe, physical domestic violence are men (CDC, 2010)
DATING VIOLENCE....

- Is very common.
- Is rarely an isolated occurrence; it usually reoccurs and can escalate in severity over time.
- Happens more to women than men, but does happen to both men and women.
- Occurs in heterosexual and same-sex relationships.
- Happens within all ages, ethnic backgrounds, religions, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic levels.
- Can take many forms (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, digital)
EMOTIONAL/VERBAL ABUSE

- Repeated lies and broken promises
- Withholding affection – giving the silent treatment
- Extreme jealousy that keeps a partner away from family, friends, or interests
- Threats, intimidation or humiliation
- Criticism, insults, name calling, humiliation
- Controlling a person’s every move – how to dress, what to eat, where to go, etc.
- Using technology—texting, calls, instant messages, or social networking sites—to check up on a partner and try to control their behavior, harass or demean them.
PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Punching, kicking, shaking, slapping, pinching, shoving, biting, hair pulling or restraining someone
- Attacking with a weapon
- Tickling or hugging, if it’s unwanted
- Forcing to use alcohol or drugs
SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any kind of unwanted sexual advance or contact. It can include everything from unwelcome sexual comments to kissing to intercourse.
- Forced sex between two people who know each is called acquaintance rape or date rape or marital rape. It is a common and serious problem, and it’s illegal.
EFFECTS OF DATING VIOLENCE

- Physical injuries, such as bruises and broken bones
- Emotional consequences, such as depression, anxiety, fear, helplessness and low self-esteem
- Victims may come to view abuse as a normal part of relationships
- When dating involves abuse, there’s little chance for a healthy relationship to develop.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EFFECTS

- Children in homes where there is domestic violence are more likely to be abused or neglected.
- Even if children are not abused, witnessing domestic violence can be traumatic and may lead to serious emotional and behavioral problems.
WHAT KEEPS A PERSON IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

- Religious, cultural, or socially learned beliefs about marriage or relationships
- Financial or emotional dependency on the abusive partner
- Isolation from friends and family
- Fears for own safety or the safety of children due to abusive partner’s threats
- Emotional blackmail by abusive partner
- Shame or embarrassment or stigma associated with admitting to being a victim
- Apologies and promises by abusive partner that (s)he will change. “Honeymoon periods”
THE COURAGE TO INTERVENE...:

- Many people are hesitant to get involved because they feel like it’s none of their business or they don’t want to interfere.
- Ignoring the problem communicates the wrong message to the victim.
- Although a victim may reject your help or deny the abuse, just knowing that someone is concerned about their safety can be a ray of hope and may contribute to them beginning to acknowledge that their relationship isn’t healthy.
IF YOU BELIEVE THAT SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP:

- Do take the abuse seriously & be willing to initiate a dialogue
- Share what you have observed and your concerns
- Let her/him tell you when they are ready – don’t push.
- Listen with empathy. Believe him/her. Don’t judge or jump to give advice
- Be supportive and let her/him know that it is not their fault
- Let her/him know that help is available
- Help the person to devise a safety plan & encourage them to leave the relationship
- Be realistic – on average it takes victims six times to leave a relationship. Abusive relationships are complicated, and the person may need to decide when it is safest to leave the relationship.
PROMOTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- Date wisely. Trust your instincts.
- Pay attention to “red flags” as you get to know a prospective partner.
- Be assertive. You deserve to be treated with respect and kindness.
- Be conscientious about safety. Know that alcohol and drugs impair judgment.
RESOURCES

- Women’s Shelter of South Texas
  1-800-580-HURT
  www.thewomensshelter.org

- National Domestic Violence Hotline
  1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)
  www.ndvh.org

- The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)
  1-800-656-4673 (HOPE)

- The Texas Council on Family Violence
  www.tcfv.org

- Texas Advocacy Project
  www.women-law.org
COUNSELING RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS & STAFF

- Counseling & Training Clinic
- Deer Oaks EAP
- Family Counseling Services
- Women’s Shelter of South Texas
- UPD and Victim’s Advocate
- I-CARE