



February Is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

About 1.5 million teens encounter physical abuse from a dating partner while in high school. In three out of four cases, research finds, parents have never discussed domestic abuse with their teenage children. When they do occur, these conversations often are reactive: A suspicion of abuse is revealed, and only then do caregivers take action. Sometimes it is too late.

During February, allies and advocates work to raise awareness of teen dating violence. PFSA is currently developing a new publication about this issue for caregivers and professionals focused on promising practices and making more people aware of teen dating violence in families and communities. Look for this helpful publication arriving in March 2019.

We encourage you to use resources like ours to provide valuable information and support to teens and their families. Education for providers and communities can assist in reducing the occurrence of dating violence in teen relationships.

WAYS YOU CAN YOU HELP BREAK THE CYCLE OF TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

- ▶ **Provide Guidance:** Ongoing education and professional development broaden awareness of patterns of abuse, cultural competency, and considerations for responding to dating violence. Learn how to offer supportive services to families with children in relationships where there is violence.
- ▶ **Talk About It:** Break stigmas by addressing dating violence in discussions with colleagues, educators, and caregivers. Participating in conversations about healthy boundaries and establishing limits in relationships can discourage toxic dating dynamics.
- ▶ **Get Educated:** Utilize research-based outlets for support. The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRC DV) leads in domestic violence prevention and awareness through events, initiatives, and resources for professionals, communities, and families.

We all have a role to play in keeping kids safe and preventing dating violence among teens. Continuing to raise awareness, speaking up when you are concerned, and taking proactive measures to prepare your community make a difference!

Please continue to visit our Facebook page and website to learn more about our new and upcoming resources on topics like this and many others.

LAST CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!

March 4 is the deadline for nomination submissions for PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids. Please visit pablueribbonchampion.org to submit your nomination!

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, March 30, 2019

Flag planting on Front & State Streets in Harrisburg

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Annual PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids Awards & Child Abuse Prevention Month Ceremony in Harrisburg

Monday, April 8, 2019

Painting for Prevention Community Mural in Wilkes-Barre, PA

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

Flag Planting & First Annual PA Blue Ribbon Champions for Safe Kids Ceremony in Pittsburgh

Updates on Child Protection Policies

Keeping our children safe must be our highest priority. Child abuse happens everywhere, and we all need to make sure kids remain safe while in our care. Agencies that provide supervision of children should start by developing strong child protection policies. Here are three primary recommendations that all child protection policies should include:

1. Obtain child abuse and criminal background clearances on all staff and volunteers working with children. In many instances, criminal background clearances are required by law for those working or volunteering with children. Know the laws and consider going above their minimum requirements to ensure all those who have contact with children have no history of abusing children.

2. Establish strong child protection policies that use known prevention strategies. For example, limit time spent by one adult with one child. Ensuring that two adults are always present with children increases accountability and lessens the opportunity for abuse. PFSA has a sample child protection policy available on our website, which can be customized to meet the needs of your organization.

3. Provide comprehensive training for everyone. Implement such training for leadership, staff, and volunteers on child abuse identification and reporting so they know what to do when they suspect child abuse. PFSA offers training on how to recognize and report child abuse, with scenarios that are relevant to your audience. Schedule a free onsite training today.

No matter the financial cost, the focus must always be on zero tolerance for the maltreatment of children, which requires a high level of honesty and transparency within the organization.

UPCOMING TRAINING DATES

Families in Recovery TTT Session

Southeast Region • March 14th & 16th

Mandated Reporter Training

PFSA Harrisburg • April 12th

Mandated Reporter Training TTT Sessions

April 16th & 17th • May 20th & 21st