



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

February 2, 2007

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## **TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS WEEK IS FEBRUARY 5-9 Help is Available at County's Domestic Violence Hotline 1-888-DVLINKS**

February 5-9, 2007 is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week across the state and the nation, and San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency officials want teenagers to know there is help available to get out of an abusive relationship.

"Teens are less likely to report crimes than any other group," said San Diego County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price. "They are particularly reluctant to report violence they experience from people they are dating. Most fear no one will believe them. Many fear retaliation from the perpetrators."

Teen Dating Violence includes sexual assault, physical violence, and verbal and emotional abuse. It occurs between teens who:

- Are in or have been in a dating relationship
- Are living or have lived together in the same home
- Have a child together or have been married

A survey conducted by the Teen Relationship Violence (TRV) Committee of the San Diego Domestic Violence Council revealed a disturbing story.

- 1 in 5 teens stated they have "kicked, hit or punched" their dating partners.
- 40 percent of girls age 14-17 report knowing someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.
- 40 percent of teens stated it is okay for boyfriends to resort to violence.

"Teen Relationship Violence is an epidemic that affects all racial/ethnic groups," said Paula J. Obrigewitch, a member of the TRV Committee. "Families, law enforcement, community organizations, and schools all play a key role in reducing teen dating violence."

In San Diego County, the Center for Community Solutions operates a 24-hour hotline where trained advocates provide education, referrals to crisis counseling, and shelter when needed. For help or additional information call 1-888-DVLINKS or visit [www.dvlinks.org](http://www.dvlinks.org).

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