

Peace Talk

SUMMER 2017

New York Looks To Teens In Effort To Prevent Domestic Violence

An estimated 1 in 3 adolescents have experienced abuse, but few are educated about it.

Written by Melissa Jeltson and reprinted with permission from the Huffington Post.

NEW YORK — A task force assembled by Mayor Bill de Blasio to tackle New York City's stubborn domestic violence problem plans to ramp up its teenage outreach efforts — hoping to stop violence before it even starts.

While most violent crime has dropped over the past decade in New York City, domestic violence hasn't budged, frustrating public safety officials and victim advocates. The task force, created in 2016, has been charged with developing a road map for reducing domestic violence across the city. It recently finished its initial fact-gathering phase, with the focus on teens as one of the major takeaways.

Prevention efforts must include educating young people about healthy relationships, said Bea Hanson, who ran the Justice Department's Office on Violence Against Women before being brought on as executive director

of the task force. She said there is currently no standardized curriculum on teen dating abuse for students in New York City.

Nationally, approximately 1 in 3 teens will experience some form of abuse

by a romantic partner, with 1 in 10 experiencing physical abuse. That dovetails with a 2013 study of NYC public high school students, which found that 10 percent of those who date have reported being intentionally

Does your partner...

Become extremely jealous?

Keep you from friends and family?

Tell you that you are worthless?

Believe they can be violent with no consequences?

Embarrass you in front of others?

Force you to do something sexual you don't want to do?

Restrict you or tell you what to do?

Constantly text or call you?

WHO WAS SOJOURNER TRUTH?

Our crisis housing facility for women and children, Sojourner Truth House, is a tribute to "Belle," a woman born into slavery in 1797. In 1843 she walked onto the pages of history when she became Sojourner – God's pilgrim. A second name – Truth – came to her "in a voice as true as God's is." Sojourner Truth traveled widely, speaking about slavery and women's rights and the dignity of all people.



Focus is on Teens in Prevention Effort

hit, slammed into something or injured with an object or weapon by the person they dated.

"That's worrisome for many reasons," Hanson said. "Not only can dating abuse have long-term physical and psychological effects, it can also interfere with a teen's academic success."

"Witnessing violence at home or experiencing violence in your own relationship has a big impact on your ability to participate in school," she said.

"The task force is evaluating educational programs used across the country to learn which might be a good model for New York City, which has the largest school district in the nation," she said.

Experts say unhealthy relationship patterns often begin in youth and continue into adulthood. Victims of teen dating violence are more likely to experience depression and substance abuse, and report higher rates of suicide attempts.

"When you ask adult survivors of domestic violence when they experienced their first abusive relationship, the majority will tell you it was during adolescence," said Elizabeth Miller, chief of adolescent and young adult medicine at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. "That really speaks to the importance of prevention work in those middle and high school years."

"While the term 'teen dating violence' has been around for at least 15 years,

the phenomenon is still surprisingly under-recognized by teens and parents alike," she said.

Teens, who may be involved in their first relationship, may not be able to determine if a partner's behaviors are normal because they lack a basis for comparison. And parents may simply miss what is happening, especially if a large portion of dating abuse occurs over technology.

Digital abuse can include texting a person constantly to check who they are with, coercing a partner to share naked photos, and "revenge porn," where a person's intimate photos are distributed without their consent.

In 2007, the National Domestic Violence Hotline launched Loveisrespect, a website that offers support and resources for young people affected by dating abuse. Last year, the project received 113,651 calls, chats and texts. Fifteen percent of the interactions were from victims or their concerned friends and family members reporting digital abuse.

"It's really complicated for parents to monitor what is going on," Miller said. "We encourage parents to talk to their kids and talk often, and ask and ask often."

At 17, Sarina Gupta, a senior at New York's Hunter College High School, is the youngest member of the mayor's task force. She is also on the National Youth Advisory Board

for Loveisrespect, where she helped to create a national lesson plan for schools to educate students on dating violence prevention.

Now, she is offering her insight to the task force as they brainstorm how best to connect with students.

"Most teens literally don't know that dating abuse exists," she said. "It's not discussed."

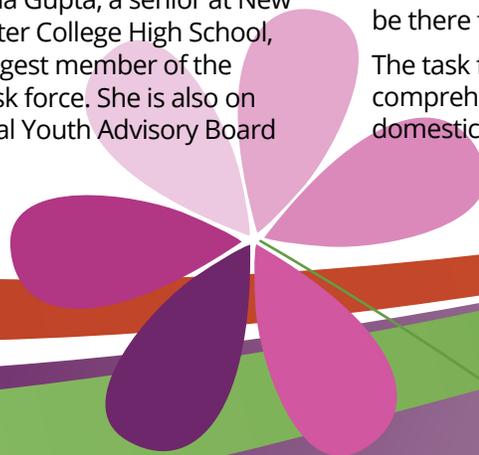
That might be partially a result of word choice. More teens are hooking up than dating per se, Gupta said, and so many teens might mistakenly assume dating abuse isn't something that could happen to them.

"It's complicated because there aren't as many 'official' relationships," she said. "But if you are engaging in a sexual relationship or an emotional relationship and unhealthy behaviors are going on, it's important to recognize it."

She urged parents and friends to withhold judgment if a teen tells them about abuse.

"You should encourage your children to feel comfortable coming to you about a relationship, and if they do come forward, be understanding and don't blame them," she said. "Sometimes, the best thing you can do is just listen. At the end of the day, your main goal is to be there for that person."

The task force plans to release a comprehensive blueprint on reducing domestic violence in the spring.



Nearly 1.5 million
high school students
nationwide experience
physical abuse from
a dating partner in a
single year.

One in ten
high school students has
been hit, slapped or physically
hurt by a partner.

Sojourner Continues Our Focus on Teen Dating Violence

One in three teens has been a part of a violent relationship, and these patterns don't stop when teens grow up. In fact, violent behavior typically begins between the ages of twelve and eighteen. Therefore, the most vital time to teach healthy relationship skills for life is when youth begin to enter dating relationships—if not earlier.

At Sojourner, we remain committed to ending violence before it starts. With your help, for the past several years, we have been engaging with teens through frank, meaningful discussions about what dating violence is, how it starts, and how it can hold our futures hostage. We have been talking with youth about self-respect, respecting those they're dating, and bringing dignity to our neighborhoods. With your support we continue to hold open conversations about the ways violence can have lifelong impact in the lives of the youth we serve.

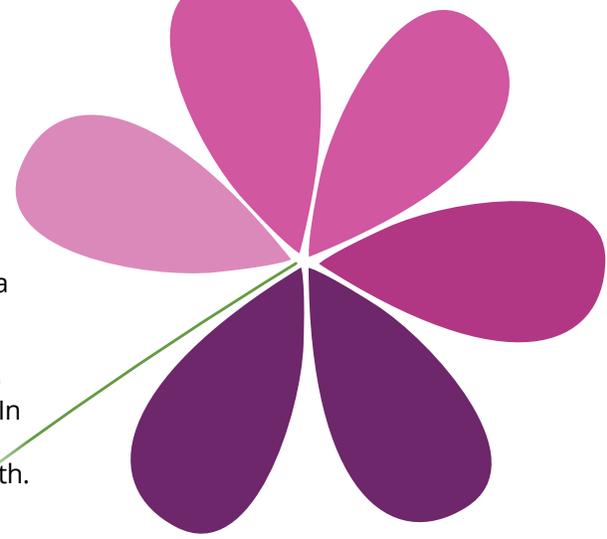
Because of you, our day-long Sojourner Healthy Dating Youth Summits held at the Family Peace Center continue

to grow reaching middle and high school students from Milwaukee area schools. Throughout the 2016-2017 school year, your support facilitated eight Summits with students from 25 Milwaukee middle and high schools. In 2017, Verizon is sponsoring 16 youth summits with plans to reach 750 youth.

Youth who attend are especially interested in learning about the evolving role of technology in relationships. "You can tell the students were second guessing their social media usage and their own digital footprint," said Robert Gates, Milwaukee Public Schools social worker. Facilitators present on a variety of topics related to healthy relationships.

This type of prevention strategy is likely to be essential in stopping future violence and abuse. "Engaging young people in meaningful conversations about healthy relationships is critical to preventing violence," says Carmen Pitre, Sojourner President and CEO.

verizon^v



You are transforming lives! Teens and adults are telling us our Healthy Dating Youth Summits have an impact:

- **100%** of chaperones that attend the summits indicated they were satisfied with the Summits
- **97%** increased their knowledge of healthy relationships
- **93%** indicated they would recommend the summits to a friend
- **82%** were able to identify warning signs of dating abuse

One in three adolescents in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of violence.



2016-2017 Sojourner Healthy Dating Youth Summits

There is more work to be done... Sojourner Youth Leadership Advisory Council

Teens are most likely to tune in to other teens. That's why Sojourner is elevating the next generation through its Youth Leadership Advisory Council. Launched in 2016 with a small group of hand selected students, our Youth Leaders attended an overnight retreat and are in training to engage with groups in their own schools. They are part of grassroots efforts to turn their peers away from violence, to give and demand respect, and to train their classmates that no one should expect to be treated abusively.

We need your help!

The number of teens that experience dating violence is striking, but another, more vital, stat leaves an equally strong impression on us: only one third of teens who experience dating violence will ever tell someone. When they do tell a parent, they deserve to be heard. Just as adults need to teach our youth about healthy relationship behavior and model healthy relationships for them, we must also be available and compassionate listeners. Eighty-one percent of

parents don't think teen dating violence is an issue and 58% can't identify signs that their child may be in an abusive relationship.¹

Learn more... Talk to your teens; more importantly listen and ask questions. Learn about resources available in your community and gather ideas on how to support youth.

Get involved... Connect with your child's school/teacher and ask about how they are addressing teen dating violence. Connect your child's school or parent social group with Sojourner. Our staff can provide education and resources to students, teachers, and parents.

Donate... Make a financial gift to help Sojourner continue teaching young people about healthy relationship. Your gift of twenty-five dollars provides a year's worth of programming for one teen!

¹ Statistics taken from LoveisRespect.org

Summer Wish List

Give Children a Fresh Start. Donate School Supplies Today!

Please note: we are only able to accept new items at this time.

We have a constant need for school supplies, including new backpacks. These supplies are distributed to children throughout the year when their families seek Sojourner services. Our goal is to secure school supplies for 200 children by September 1, 2017. Can we count on you?

Please consider contributing other goods from our wish list as well, such as pillows, pajamas, sheets and comforters. Your continued generosity ensures that Sojourner families have the resources they need to rebuild their lives.

Please see our Wish List for a full description of needs. Items may be dropped off at 619 W. Walnut Street in Milwaukee. Our current Sojourner Wish List is also available on Amazon.com.

Thank you for helping Sojourner families transform their lives and create futures free of violence for their children.

ITEMS OF GREATEST NEED

School Supplies
Women's pajamas
Twin XL sheets and comforters

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Backpacks, calculators, notebooks, folders, paper, pens, pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue, glue sticks, USB flash drives, rulers and protractors, uniform clothing, socks, shoes

WOMEN

Underwear (all sizes, especially 7-14)
Sleepwear: bathrobes, pajamas, non-skid slippers

CHILDREN & YOUNG ADULTS

Sleepwear
Socks
Underwear
Toys
Sports apparel

INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Pack and Plays
Pack and Play sheets
Baby bath tub
Strollers
Diapers (sizes 4-6)
Wipes
Teething gel
Infant Tylenol

MEN

Personal care items for men
– soap, shampoo, body wash, deodorant
Brushes and combs
Walmart gift cards

Celebrating 2017

Sojourner Safe & Healthy

24



Sojourner Safe & Healthy 24 Success! It Starts with You and Ends with Safe and Healthy Families

Because of you...

- Women and their children, leaving violent relationships have a safe place to sleep.
- Children across Milwaukee will receive the services and supports they need to unlearn the violence they have witnessed.
- Men and women were given the assistance they needed to eliminate violence in their interpersonal relationships.

We are overwhelmingly grateful for your support and commitment to our

mission. In just 24 short hours, you made a monumental impact on our agency. Thank you for donating your time, talent, and treasure to help us secure more than \$160,000 in one day.

Special thanks to the WKLH Morning Crew for broadcasting live from the Family Peace Center to launch Sojourner Safe & Healthy 24 and to the November Project Milwaukee for an unexpected visit and lots of energy.

Thank you for being the light.

"I will not let my life's light be determined by the darkness around me." – Sojourner Truth

SOJOURNER FASHION SHOW 2017



Thank you for joining Carlene and Buddy Julius and Kaye and Mark Kass in taking a stand against family violence. Your commitment to the individuals and families we serve shined through at our Sojourner Fashion Show 2017

presented by Harley-Davidson Motor Company. Thank you for making it possible for survivors and their children to find peace, hope, and safety.

Your support is helping women like...

- Jessica as she applied for and was accepted to an accelerated college program.
- Denice as she received job coaching, and gained the courage to apply for and accept a promotion.
- Krystal as she earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree

Models

Attorney Jason Abraham	Buddy Julius	Tristah Romero
Amanda Baltz	Kaye Kass	Keri Lynn
Attorney Jason Baltz	Mark Kass	SanFelippo
Rod Burks	Mechelle King	Nina Sathasivam-Rueckert
Portia Cobb	Mike Kwiatkowski	Jim Schleif
Daniel de la Concha	Marina Mathieu Kuhn	Heather Shannon
Mary Dowell	Meg McKenzie	Gaulien (Gee) Smith
Beth Healy	Maureen Mulvaney	Molly Snyder
Angie Helfert	Dan O'Donnell	Terri Steidl
Ashley Hines	Magda Peck	Suzanne Terry
Carlene Julius	Ridder (Shaun Ridder)	Heather Wolfgram
		Rob Wood

To see Sojourner Fashion Show 2017 photos, visit Sojourner Family Peace Center's Facebook page.

Presented by:



Featured Boutiques:



Generous support provided by:





Carmen Pitre
President & CEO

We need your help to sustain our essential programming.

Please make your gift today. Your contribution ensures that valuable programming continues through the end of the year.

Please make checks payable to:

Sojourner Foundation
619 W. Walnut Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Donate online at:
www.familypeacecenter.org

Connect Online     
STAY CONNECTED WITH SOJOURNER FAMILY PEACE CENTER

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Department

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Habush, Habush &
Rottier, S.C.

You are not alone.

If you are in an abusive relationship and need help, call Sojourner 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline at **414-933-2722**.



Download our app – available on iPhone and Android phones.

Administration/ General Information

P: 414-276-1911
F: 414-276-1509

Sojourner 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline

P: 414-933-2722
F: 414-934-6079

TTY
414-727-2342

www.familypeacecenter.org

