



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Teens Participate in “Love is...” Campaign as part of Teen Dating Violence Prevention Month

EAU CLAIRE, Wis.-February, 2018– Love has many definitions, but abuse isn’t one of them! Local teens will take part in a “Love is...” campaign to encourage their peers to define what love means to them. As **one in three** teens experience dating abuse, it’s essential to get teens talking about love and relationships.

Dating violence is physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence within a dating relationship. This can include stalking. It can happen in person or electronically, and may happen between a current or former dating partner. Dating violence can happen to anyone; however teens and young adults experience it more than any other age group. In a single year, over 2,500 Eau Claire County teens could be experiencing dating violence.

Teens learn how to behave in relationships from peers, adults in their lives, and the media. It’s time to empower them to build healthy relationships from the ground up. “It is important that young people start defining what healthy love looks like to them,” says Abby Hinz, Public Health Nurse. This month, we encourage teens and all community members to define what love is to them.



Everyone has a hand in ending dating violence! What can you do?

- **Know the resources.**
 - Everyone has the right to a healthy and safe relationship free of abuse. If you or someone you know has a question about a relationship, healthy or unhealthy, visit <http://www.loveisrespect.org/> or text “loveis” to 22522. Locally you can contact a 24-hour advocate at *Bolton Refuge House (715-834-9578)* or *Family Support Center (715-723-1138)*.
- **Get involved in Eau Claire efforts.**
 - The Health Department works with several community partners to teach the *Safe Dates* program. This program educates teens about healthy relationships. To learn more, contact Abby Hinz at 715-495-1085.
 - Join Eau Claire Healthy Communities efforts related to healthy relationship promotion. To get involved, email Healthy.Communities@co.eau-claire.wi.us.

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