

Pointers For Parents

Asking Your Teen About Relationship Violence

(NAPSA)—It may seem like “puppy love,” but teen relationships can be very intense. They can also be violent.

A recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* reported that one in five high school girls has been abused by a dating partner.

Moreover, a study commissioned by the Empower Program (an organization which teaches young people about youth violence prevention) and sponsored by Liz Claiborne Inc. found that 81 percent of parents don't acknowledge teen dating violence as an issue. And the majority (54 percent) share that they have not spoken to their child about dating violence.

The good news for parents is that Liz Claiborne Inc. has created a new, free handbook titled “A Parent's Guide to Teen Dating Violence: 10 Questions to Start the Conversation.”

The handbook provides parents and guardians of teenagers with conversation starters and tools to help open a dialogue about this tough issue.

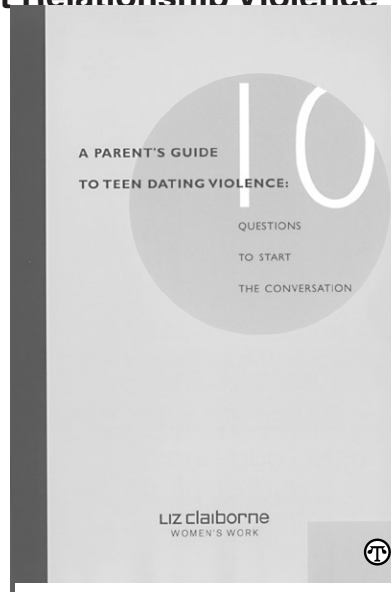
Included in the handbook are statistics on dating violence and a clear definition of relationship abuse. Actual quotes from both parents and teens are interspersed throughout the copy.

Liz Claiborne Inc. enlisted the counsel of experts to write the handbook, including Rosalind Wiseman, co-founder of the Empower Program.

Wiseman offers these tips to remember when talking to your teen:

- Take your child out to a coffee shop or for a drive, away from siblings and distractions for both of you. Set up a comfortable environment and listen respectfully.

- Remember to support your child and confirm that you are a



A few well-chosen words on the subject of dating and violence may help protect a teen.

good resource and a non-judgmental listener.

- Give your teen realistic strategies to confront the problem effectively.

- Share your own experiences, especially those where you made mistakes and learned from them.

- Keep in mind that sometimes your teen just wants someone who will listen, not someone to jump in and solve all of their problems for them.

- Pay attention—anytime your teenager wants to talk with you, drop everything and listen.

- Watch for signs that they may want to talk, such as if your son or daughter hangs around where you are but doesn't necessarily say anything.

To learn more about teen dating violence and how to start a conversation, visit www.lizclaiborne.com/loveisnotabuse, where you may also download a copy of the handbook.