PARENTS OF MURDERED DATING VIOLENCE VICTIM, LEGISLATORS, AND TEACHERS UNITE TO LAUNCH ‘MADE’–MOMS AND DADS FOR EDUCATION TO STOP TEEN DATING ABUSE

National coalition brings together all sectors in the fight for education to prevent teen dating violence in every state across the country

New York, NY – December 2, 2008 – Today, advocates for teen dating violence education from across the country are coming together to launch ‘MADE’ -- Moms and Dads for Education to Stop Teen Dating Abuse. Ann and Chris Burke, educators and parents of Lindsay Ann Burke who was murdered by her abusive ex-boyfriend, are joining efforts with Liz Claiborne Inc. and Redbook magazine in this national coalition that will consist of parents, teachers and concerned citizens who are advocating for every high school and middle school in the country to teach about teen dating violence and abuse.

National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) President, Rhode Island Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch, National Foundation for Women Legislators President Robin Read, Redbook Editor-in-Chief Stacy Morrison, Seventeen Magazine Editor-in-Chief Ann Shoket and New York City students and teachers are joining the Burkes today to support this new nationwide initiative. Together, they are urging parents across the country to take action by signing the online MADE petition and to work within their state to ensure legislation is introduced for teen dating violence education.

“It is time for all parents to make the commitment and address teen dating violence as a serious health issue,” said Ann Burke. “I want to show all parents and teachers that having legislation passed is possible. With the help of Attorney General Lynch, Rhode Island middle and high school students are now receiving the education they deserve. I want to see teens in all 50 states educated on this issue.”

In June, the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) passed the first Teen Dating Violence Education Resolution encouraging all attorneys general to take up this issue. This resolution endorsed the Lindsay Ann Burke Act, legislation proposed by Attorney General Lynch and passed in 2007 that mandates dating violence education in every Rhode Island school district, as a model for all states.

Most recently, the National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL) introduced and passed a similar resolution that specifically encourages women legislators to introduce legislation on teen dating violence and abuse policies and curriculum.

MADE Founding Members are urging all parents, educators and advocates for healthy teen relationships to take an active role in this initiative. By signing an online petition, they can encourage their state legislators to address this urgent national problem through teen dating abuse education. The petition follows and can be found online at www.loveisnotabuse.com/made.
MADE Petition

The prevalence of teen dating violence and abuse is a serious problem that must be confronted.

- Nearly half of teen girls who have been in a relationship say they have been victims of verbal, physical, or sexual abuse by their boyfriends.¹

- One in five 13-14 year olds in relationships say they know friends and peers who have been struck in anger (kicked, hit, slapped, or punched) by a boyfriend or girlfriend.²

I am a concerned parent/teacher/citizen, and I want all teenagers to be taught about healthy relationships, to learn how to recognize the signs of abuse, and know where to get help if they are in an abusive relationship.

I am signing this online petition to ask my state legislators to introduce legislation that would ensure that every middle school and high school in the state is teaching a course about teen dating abuse every year and has a strong policy against it. I support the resolution passed by all 50 attorneys general recommending new legislation to bring teen dating violence and abuse education to all schools. Together, we can take a stand to protect our children and through education, break the cycle of domestic violence.

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¹ Liz Claiborne Inc. Tweens and Teen Dating Violence Survey 2008 conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU)

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