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National Network to End Domestic Violence Recognizes Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Washington, D.C. – The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) today welcomed the beginning of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. This month aims to bring attention to pervasive teen dating violence and what communities can do to end it.

"Teen dating violence is a devastating reality in our schools and communities," said Sue Else, NNEDV's president. "Let us come together to prevent dating violence before it begins and stop young abusers from victimizing countless partners over their lifetimes."

Females between the ages of 16 and 24 are more likely to be victims of intimate partner violence than any other age group, experiencing abuse almost three times more than the national average.

"We need to teach our young people to reject violence and adopt mutual respect in all their relationships," Else said. "Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month reminds us to teach teenagers what healthy relationships look like and what services are available to them if they are dating someone who is controlling, coercive and abusive."

Since technology is an integral part of teens' lives, many cases of teen dating violence involve technology such as social networking sites, cell phones and other technologies. To help teens maintain their privacy and safety in the digital age, NNEDV's Safety Net Project created a two-page guide called "Tech Savvy Teens: Choosing Who Gets to See Your Info." (<http://nnedv.org/resources/safetynetdocs.html>)

"It's important for parents not to threaten to take away cell phones and other technology from teens because that will discourage them from telling their parents about abuse perpetrated against them via technology," said Cindy Southworth, director of NNEDV's Safety Net Project. "Parents and teens should talk about appropriate uses of technology and teach them mutual respect for anyone they date."

Two-thirds of teenaged victims do not report the abuse to anyone. The effects of abuse can be long-lasting. Young people who experience abuse are more likely to use drugs and alcohol and attempt suicide. Abusive teens are likely to continue their patterns of using violence and control in future relationships.

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NNEDV, a 501(c)(3) organization, is a leading national voice for domestic violence victims and their allies. Its members include the 56 state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence. It works closely with them to understand the needs of domestic violence victims and advocacy programs. NNEDV has been a premiere national organization advancing the movement against domestic violence for the past 15 years, after leading efforts among domestic violence advocates and survivors in urging Congress to pass the landmark Violence Against Women Act of 1994. To learn more about NNEDV, please visit www.nnedv.org.