

*E-Update (April 28, 2006)*



**It's everybody's business.**

## **NEW SURVEY OF AMERICAN TEENS REVEALS SHOCKING LEVELS OF TEEN DATING ABUSE AND VIOLENCE; CAEPV MEMBER LIZ CLAIBORNE RELEASES LOVE IS NOT ABUSE CURRICULUM IN HIGH SCHOOLS ACROSS US**

*Washington, DC* -- A new survey on teen dating abuse and violence reveals that significant numbers of teens across America are experiencing rampant emotional, verbal, sexual and physical abuse in their dating relationships. The survey on teen relationships was conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU) and commissioned by CAEPV Member Liz Claiborne Inc.

Teens surveyed ranged from 13-18. The research shows deep and troubling evidence that significant numbers of today's teens are not only victims of dating abuse, but are accepting it as normal. Many teens face tremendous pressure to have and keep relationships, particularly if it is "serious". Teens in serious relationships report -- often by a 2 to 1 margin -- more abuse, controlling, and even violent behavior compared to other teens. In fact nearly 1 in 5 teens who have been in a serious relationship said their boyfriend or girlfriend would threaten to hurt themselves or their partner if there were a break-up and 1 in 3 teens who have been in a serious relationship report that sex is expected. Among the key findings:

### Physical Threats and Safety

- ▶ 30% of all teens report worrying about their personal physical safety in a relationship;
- ▶ 1 in 5 teens (20%) in a serious relationship report they have been hit, slapped or pushed by a partner;
- ▶ 13% of Hispanic teens reported that hitting a partner was permissible.

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*New Survey of American Teens Reveals Shocking Levels of Teen Dating Abuse and Violence; CAEPV Member Liz Claiborne Releases Love Is Not Abuse Curriculum in High Schools Across U.S.*

## Controlling/Abusive Behavior

- ▶ 64% of teens have been with someone who acted really jealous, asking where they were all the time;
- ▶ 55% of teens in serious relationships have done something that compromised their values to please their partner;
- ▶ 1 in 4 teens in serious relationships were asked to only spend time with their partner and prevented from spending time with family or friends;
- ▶ 1 in 3 teens in serious relationships were asked by their partner where they were and who they were with all the time;
- ▶ 61% of teens said they have had a boyfriend or girlfriend who made them feel bad or embarrassed about themselves;
- ▶ More than 1 in 4 teens have been in a relationship where their partner calls them names and puts them down.

## Sexual Pressures

- ▶ Almost one third of girls who have been in a relationship (29%) said they have been pressured to have sex or engage in sex they don't want;
- ▶ Nearly 1 out of 4 teen girls of all ages report that they have gone further sexually in a relationship than they wanted;
- ▶ Nearly 1 out of 2 girls worry that their partner will break up with them if they did not agree to engage in sex;
- ▶ 1 in 3 teens between the ages of 16 and 18 and 1 in 4 teens between the ages of 13 and 18 say sex is expected in their relationships.

Responding to the data, Senators Mike Crapo and Hillary Rodham Clinton joined with Liz Claiborne Inc. Chairman and CEO, Paul R. Charron to announce the national distribution of the ***Love is Not Abuse*** curriculum designed to help teens understand and prevent teen dating abuse and violence. During the week of April 24th, ***Love Is Not Abuse*** will be taught in over 365 schools in 37 states reaching more than 33,000 students.

Created with the Education Development Center, Inc (EDC) and with the guidance of some of the nation's pre-eminent authorities on intimate partner abuse and teens, the ***Love Is Not Abuse*** curriculum was developed by Liz Claiborne Inc. to help 9th grade students recognize, respond and seek help for their friends and peers who may be victims of abuse. It was pilot tested last year and is now being taught across the country in health or English classes. The curriculum contains detailed background information for teachers on the scope of the issue and provides strategies for responding to students who disclose being in an abusive situation. Break the Cycle, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to help teens who are victims of dating violence, is working with Liz Claiborne to be a resource for teachers and students who may need help with an abusive situation.

Commenting on the data, Paul R. Charron, chairman and chief executive officer of Liz Claiborne Inc., said: “The fact that significant numbers of teens are not only victims of dating abuse, but are experiencing this behavior as normal is particularly distressing when you consider that today’s teens are our best hope to help create a society where intimate partner violence is simply not tolerated. That is why Liz Claiborne Inc. worked with the Education Development Center and an advisory board of experts to create a curriculum that provides a basic understanding of dating abuse, how to recognize it and suggestions for getting help.”

Senator Crapo and Senator Clinton wrote all their colleagues in the Senate to express support for the use of this curriculum and asked their fellow Senators to seek distribution of their curriculum in their states. “Teen dating violence affects all communities regardless of race, gender, socio-economics or rural/urban divisions,” said United States Senator Mike Crapo (R-Idaho). “I am pleased to support the work of Liz Claiborne Inc., the Education Development Center, Break the Cycle and Teenage Research Unlimited in their collaborative ***Love is Not Abuse*** curriculum designed to raise awareness of the crime of teen dating violence. I commend them on their work in this compelling issue facing families and communities nationwide today.”

“It is critical that we teach young men and women that abuse of any kind is never acceptable. Education programs like the Liz Claiborne curriculum are essential to help raise attention to this problem,” said Senator Clinton.

Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) also commented on the importance of the issue by stating, “The ***Love is Not Abuse*** campaign promises to give teens the tools to recognize and avoid abusive relationships. As Congress recently underscored when it reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act, education and prevention are fundamental elements of the nationwide battle against domestic violence, dating violence, sexual abuse and stalking.”

“It is our hope that schools currently signed on to use ***Love is Not Abuse*** will inspire more high schools across the country to participate in the program,” said Senator Joe Lieberman. “Greater understanding and awareness of teen dating violence brought about through sensitive and thoughtful instruction increases awareness of the problem and will inspire those who need help to seek it.”

For more information on the curriculum, including how to get it, contact Liz Claiborne Inc. at [www.loveisnotabuse.com](http://www.loveisnotabuse.com).