

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 373

Designating the month of February 2010 as “National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 9, 2009

Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JANUARY 25, 2010

Considered and agreed to with an amended preamble

RESOLUTION

Designating the month of February 2010 as “National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month”.

Whereas dating, domestic, and sexual violence affect women regardless of their age, and teens and young women are especially vulnerable;

Whereas, approximately 1 in 3 adolescent girls in the United States is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting youth;

Whereas nationwide, 1 in 10 high school students (9.9 percent) has been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend;

Whereas more than 1 in 4 teenagers have been in a relationship where a partner is verbally abusive;

Whereas 20 percent of teen girls exposed to physical dating violence did not attend school because the teen girls felt unsafe either at school, or on the way to or from school, on 1 or more occasions in a 30-day period;

Whereas violent relationships in adolescence can have serious ramifications for victims by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide, and adult revictimization;

Whereas being physically and sexually abused leaves teen girls up to 6 times more likely to become pregnant and more than 2 times as likely to report a sexually transmitted disease;

Whereas nearly 3 in 4 children ages 11 to 14 (referred to in this preamble as “tweens”), say that dating relationships usually begin at age 14 or younger and about 72 percent of eighth and ninth graders report “dating”;

Whereas 1 in 5 tweens say their friends are victims of dating violence and nearly 1/2 of tweens who are in relationships know friends who are verbally abused;

Whereas more than 3 times as many tweens (20 percent) as parents of tweens (6 percent) admit that parents know little or nothing about the dating relationships of tweens;

Whereas teen dating abuse most often takes place in the home of 1 of the partners;

Whereas a majority of parents surveyed believe they have had a conversation with their teen about what it means to be in a healthy relationship, but the majority of teens surveyed said that they have not had a conversation about dating abuse with a parent in the past year;

Whereas digital abuse and “sexting” is becoming a new frontier for teen dating abuse;

Whereas 1 in 4 teens in a relationship say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through cellphones and texting;

Whereas 3 in 10 young people have sent or received nude pictures of other young people on their cell or online, and 61 percent who have “sexted” report being pressured to do so at least once;

Whereas targets of digital abuse are almost 3 times as likely to contemplate suicide as those who have not encountered such abuse (8 percent vs. 3 percent), and targets of digital abuse are nearly 3 times more likely to have considered dropping out of school;

Whereas the severity of violence among intimate partners has been shown to be greater in cases where the pattern of violence has been established in adolescence;

Whereas primary prevention programs are a key part of addressing teen dating violence and many successful community examples include education, community outreach, and social marketing campaigns that also understand the cultural appropriateness of programs;

Whereas skilled assessment and intervention programs are also necessary for youth victims and abusers; and

Whereas the establishment of National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month will benefit schools,

communities, and families regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or sex: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates the month of February 2010, as
3 “National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Pre-
4 vention Month”;

5 (2) supports communities to empower teens to
6 develop healthier relationships; and

7 (3) calls upon the people of the United States,
8 including youth and parents, schools, law enforce-
9 ment, State and local officials, and interested groups
10 to observe National Teen Dating Violence Awareness
11 and Prevention Month with appropriate programs
12 and activities that promote awareness and preven-
13 tion of the crime of teen dating violence in their
14 communities.

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