

## Sample Teen Dating Violence Model School Policy

**Introduction** ABC School is committed to creating a school climate that is supportive and respectful to providing a safe environment for learning. To achieve this goal, it is essential that the school be free of violence and harassment among students and faculty.

**Purpose** The purpose of this policy is to:

- Heighten awareness of teen dating violence, for both students and faculty.
- Provide direction in responding to incidents.
- Prevent future incidents of dating violence.

### Teen Dating Violence Response Team

<b>Response Team</b>	<p>ABC School will maintain a dating abuse response team made up of school personnel and students who have received specialized training on domestic violence. This training will prepare them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct investigations and assessments.</li> <li>• Assist victims with safety planning.</li> <li>• Make appropriate referrals.</li> <li>• Decide and implement appropriate disciplinary action.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance of disciplinary action.</li> <li>• Evaluate and recommend changes in teen dating violence policy.</li> </ul> <p>It is important to assure that members of the response team serve willingly and exhibit sensitivity to the issue.</p>
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### Definitions

<b>Teen Dating Violence</b>	<p>Teen dating violence is a pattern of coercive behavior that one partner exerts over the other for the purpose of establishing and maintaining power and control. This behavior may take various forms: emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, limiting independence, isolation, threats and intimidation, harassment and minimizing, denying and blaming.</p> <p>In addition, it is also important to recognize incidents of stalking in which the perpetrator targets someone without the agreement or reciprocity of that person, and commits harassing or violent acts against the target person.</p>
<b>Abuser</b>	<p>An abuser is a person who uses the coercive tactics listed above to establish and</p>

	maintain power and control over their partner. Abusers come from every cultural, educational, religious and economic stratum of our society. An abuser's background is never grounds to justify the abuse. The behavior an abuser exhibits is always a <b>choice</b> .
<b>Victim</b>	A victim is the target of the abuser's coercive and/or violent acts.
<b>Teen Partner</b>	The term "partner" includes persons who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have or have had a dating or sexual relationship.</li> <li>• Are same sex couples.</li> </ul>

## Procedure

<b>Complaints of Teen Dating Violence</b>	Victims, students, faculty/staff or parents may file a complaint of teen dating violence. The complaint may be of verbal, nonverbal, written, physical or sexual behaviors that are observed, reported or experienced. The complaint may be verbal or written and should be filed with the ABC School principal. The principle will contact the ABC School response team.
<b>Investigation</b>	Once a complaint has been filed, the ABC School response team will initiate a prompt investigation. The investigation will be conducted in a way to maintain confidentiality to the extent allowed with a full and fair investigation. The investigation will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private interview with the victim.</li> <li>• Separate interview with the person alleged to have committed the behavior.</li> <li>• Discussion with witnesses if necessary.</li> </ul> <p>If it is determined that inappropriate behavior(s) has occurred, immediate action will be taken to eliminate the behavior(s) and disciplinary action will be taken. It is ABC School policy that parents of the abuser and victim will be contacted in situations involving teen dating violence. If warranted, law enforcement and/or the Department of Social Services should be contacted.</p>
<b>Disciplinary Action for the Offender</b>	Once it has been determined that inappropriate behavior(s) has been committed, the ABC School response team will decide on the disciplinary action that is warranted. The consequences will vary from verbal warning to expulsion depending on the frequency and severity of the inappropriate behavior(s). When using the following guidelines, remember that even a first offense can be a crime. <b>If a crime has been committed, the police should be notified immediately.</b> Additional disciplinary actions may include the following: <p><b>Verbal/Nonverbal/Written Behaviors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Offense                      Verbal Warning/Education</li> <li>• Repeated Offense                Administrator/Student/Parent Conference Detention, Stay Away Contract</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Physical Behaviors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Offense                      Detention/Education/Suspension Stay Away Contract</li> <li>• Repeated Offense                      Administrator/Student/Parent Conference plus Stay Away Contract, Suspension, or Expulsion</li> <li>• Weapons/Stalking                      Expulsion, report to police</li> </ul> <p><b>Sexual Behaviors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Offense                      Detention/Education/Suspension Stay Away Contract</li> <li>• Repeated Offense                      Suspension/Psychological Assessment Stay Away Contract</li> <li>• Rape/Attempted Rape or Indecent Exposure                      Expulsion, report to the police</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support Services for the Victim</b></p>	<p>ABC School will provide a victim of teen dating violence with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Names of faculty/staff that have been identified as a support system.</li> <li>• A Stay Away Contract when warranted.</li> <li>• Referrals for outside support and/or counseling.</li> </ul>

**Orders of Protection**

<p><b>Handling Orders of Protection</b></p>	<p>ABC School will work with students who have obtained an order of protection to ensure their safety. Students should inform the ABC administration that an order of protection has been issued. Administration will contact the response team, who will work with the abuser and his/her parents to initiate a Stay Away Contract.</p>
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Adapted from the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence