

# CROSSROADS CONNECTION

Spring 2010

Volume 12, Issue 1

## Teen Dating Violence

Crossroads Connection is an annual publication concerning issues of domestic violence in Jefferson and Clearfield Counties.

For more information, call (814) 938-3580 or Toll Free 1-800-598-3998

Dating violence is defined by the United States Department of Justice as: "the perpetration or threat of an act of violence by at least one member of an unmarried couple on the other member within the context of dating or courtship." In dating violence, one partner tries to maintain power and control over the other through some form of abuse. Dating violence crosses economic, racial and social lines; most victims are young women who are also at higher risk for serious injury.

Teenagers often experience violence in dating relationships. Statistics show one in three teenagers has experienced some form of violence while dating and only half recognize the warning signs that it is a dangerous relationship. Many teens do not report it because they are afraid to tell friends and family that it is occurring. Abuse in a dating relationship can be confusing and frightening at any age. For teenagers, who are just beginning to date and develop romantic relationships, this abuse is especially difficult.

A 2008 study commissioned by Liz Claiborne and [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org) found:

- One in three high school students have been or will be involved in an abusive relationship.
- Forty percent of teenage girls age 14 to 17 say they know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.
- In one study, 30 to 50 percent of female high school students reported having already experienced teen dating violence.
- Teen dating violence most often takes place in the home of one of the partners.
- In 1995, seven percent of all murder victims were young women killed by their boyfriends.
- One in five dating couples report some type of violence in their relationship.
- More than half of young women raped (68 percent) knew their rapist either as a boyfriend, friend or casual acquaintance.

Teenagers can choose better relationships when they learn to identify the early warning signs of an abusive relationship, understand they have choices and believe they are valuable people who deserve to be treated with respect.

Schools, parents, teachers and community organizations all can help identify dating violence and provide support for abuse victims. But teens themselves must also learn how to reach out and help friends who are victims of relationship abuse. If you are a victim of dating violence, please contact your local Crossroads office for further information, options and support.



The Crossroads Project provides services to adult victims of domestic violence and their dependent children. To obtain information regarding available services, please call Crossroads' 24-hour hotline: Punxsutawney 814-938-3580; Brookville 814-849-2779; DuBois 814-371-1223; Clearfield 814-768-7200; or toll free at 1-800-598-3998.

The Crossroads Project is administered by Community Action, Inc. The Executive Director of Community Action, Inc. is Robert A. Cardamone. The address is Community Action, Inc.'s Crossroads Project, 105 Grace Way, Punxsutawney, PA 15767-1209.



## Characteristics of Dating Violence

### Early warning signs your date may eventually become abusive:

- Extreme jealousy
- Controlling behavior
- Unpredictable mood swings
- Alcohol and drug use
- Explosive anger
- Isolates you from friends and family
- Uses force during an argument
- Blames others for problems or feelings
- Cruel to animals or children
- Verbally abusive
- Abused former partners
- Threatens violence

### Common clues that indicate a teenager may be experiencing dating violence:

- Physical signs of injury
- Truancy, dropping out of school
- Failing grades
- Indecision
- Changes in mood or personality
- Alcohol and drug use
- Pregnancy
- Emotional outburst
- Isolation
- Witnessing any of the early warning signs occurring during the relationship

### Senior Project Donation

Crossroads recently received a donation of 600+ non-perishable food items from high school senior, Heather Rodgers.

Heather prepared handouts for students at Parkview Elementary School and organized the collection of food items from the students.

Rodgers had heard about Crossroads from a friend and decided it was a cause she would like to help.

Many thanks to Heather!



Pictured are Heather Rodgers and Susan McLaughlin:  
Crossroads Project Director

### DV-ESP Winning Poem

(Domestic Violence Education School Program)

#### **There She Lays by Janna Rodgers**

**There she lays, she tries to sleep  
She wished her life were like her dreams  
All she heard was her mother cry  
She knew they had to leave, or they both would die**

**Her pain wasn't just all skin deep  
It lived in her heart, where no one could see  
All she wanted was one thing...  
For her and her mother to be free, off a string...**

**It were as if they were tied to a rope  
But her and her mother were afraid to let go  
Always locked inside the house  
She always feared they would never get out**

**Her life like a sorrow, black hole  
She felt dead even alive because she felt no soul  
Her mother again was crying  
She didn't know how to stop this from deriving**

**There he came over her way  
She laid there and took it like an abandoned stray  
"Daddy I'm sorry", that's what she did say  
Screaming and crying, all they knew...  
Would they ever have the strength to break through?**

**One night the screams got so loud  
The neighbors heard, so they spoke aloud  
They called 911, they soon had arrived  
When they got there, the girl and her mother had died**

**The police came in and took her dad away  
Now for sure, her and her mom had escaped  
They're holding hands, like in her dreams  
Now golden angels, among where they sing**

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## Bullying Becomes Deadly

Is bullying something that just started or has it been going on for a long time? Growing up, most of us have had some experience with it. Of course, it wasn't called bullying, it was referred to as "kids just being kids". It was seen as a right of passage by most. So why all the hype now? Here's why:

- February 12, 2008, a 14 year old boy shot a student at E.O. Green Junior High School in California, causing the 15 year old victim to be brain-dead.
- February 14, 2008, a gunman killed five students and then himself, and wounded 17 more when he open fired on a classroom at Northern Illinois University. The gunman was identified as a former student.
- November 12, 2008, a 15 year old female student was shot and killed by a classmate at Dillard High School in Ft. Lauderdale.

These reports are only a few that have happened. Let's not forget the nation's deadliest school shooting, Columbine High School. Fourteen students (including the killers) and one teacher were killed and 23 others were wounded.

Bullying can become deadly, which is all the more reason to recognize it, call it for what it is and preach prevention. A person is bullied when they are exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons and have difficulty defending themselves. This definition includes three important components: a pattern of behavior repeated over time; an imbalance of power or strength; and aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.

Conflict is a normal part of growing up and can be mediated by avoidance, accommodation or compromise. Bullying is a learned response to conflict often learned by witnessing violence in the home. Unlike conflict, bullying is about power and control and can not be mediated.

Bullying affects a school and students in many adverse ways. It has a negative effect on the social environment, creates an atmosphere of fear among students and reduces a student's ability to learn.

### Bullying can take many forms:

- Derogatory comments, insults and name calling
- Social exclusion, rejection or isolation
- Physical violence such as hitting, kicking, shoving and spitting
- Spreading lies, false rumors and gossip
- Extortion of money, clothing or other possessions
- Threats
- Being forced to do things
- Racial name calling or ostracism
- Unwelcome touches, sexual comments or gestures
- Cyber (many of the above behaviors via cell phone or internet)

Bully prevention/intervention can only be done through a team effort, involving students, school personnel, parents and community. The better we understand bullying, the more effective we can be in addressing the behavior and helping all parties involved - bullies, victims and bystanders.

Crossroads provides prevention education services to multiple school districts throughout Jefferson and Clearfield Counties which address a variety of teen issues including bullying. Contact Crossroads for more information.

## Meeting Needs of Children in Shelter

Crossroads is always looking for ways to help child victims of domestic violence adjust to living in shelter.

Many of these children have to flee their home, leaving behind their toys and personal belongings.

The shelter staff welcomes any of the following items to help us, help the children:

- Birthday party items and gifts
- Birthday cake kits
- Barbies
- Board games
- CD players and CDs
- Cookie dough and Cookie cutters
- Craft items
- Diaries
- Dolls
- Drinks
- DVD's (rated G)
- Family fun items and activities
- Freezer pops
- Fruit
- Holiday gifts
- Journals
- Leap Frog systems and games
- Lego's
- Movie tickets
- MP3 players
- Outside sports equipment
- Pack-n-play baby beds
- Pizza kits or coupons
- Reward gifts for positive behavior
- Snack foods
- Swimming passes
- Video games and systems



**Crossroads provided 2,932 days  
of emergency shelter for 81  
individuals from 7/1/08—6/30/09**

## Shelter Holidays

Imagine spending your holidays away from your home, pets and personal belongings. For some families unfortunately, the holidays are not always happy and joyous.

Crossroads would like to thank those who helped with gifts, holiday dinners and volunteering their time and support during the holiday season: Bobbi Reitz; Brookville Nursery School; Brookville First Baptist Church; Revolutions Gymnastics Team; Brookville Area High School Swim Team; Steffy United Methodist Church; Gatti Pharmacy; Bob Stevens; Cheryl Hamner; Merlena Collins; and the many individuals and organizations who helped our residents have a merrier holiday season!

## BECOME A CROSSROADS VOLUNTEER!

**FREE Domestic Violence training  
classes are offered each Spring  
and Fall.**

**Classes may be taken to enhance  
personal or professional skills and  
will prepare you for Crossroads  
volunteer opportunities.**

**A little bit of your time may make a  
world of difference to someone in  
need.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CALL 1-800-598-3998

## Suicide Threats are a Warning to Abuse Victims and Others

On January 13, 2010 Paul Richey, a Pennsylvania State Trooper, lost his life when responding to a domestic violence call in rural Venango County. The abuser, Michael J. Smith, also fatally shot his wife, Nancy Smith, and later turned the gun on himself, committing suicide. Smith had a history of erratic and abusive behavior. In fact, just several days previously he was overheard outside his home threatening to shoot an acquaintance.

Unfortunately, domestic violence all too often involves suicide and homicide threats. All such threats should be taken seriously. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) keeps track of domestic violence fatalities in Pennsylvania and their annual reports can be seen on their website at [www.pcadv.org](http://www.pcadv.org). The statistics are sobering. For example, in their annual fatality report for 2008 of the 147 lives lost in Pennsylvania as a result of domestic violence, 35 were abusers who committed suicide, usually after killing the victim or killing others who tried to intervene.

A common tactic batterers use to control their victims is threatening to commit suicide. These threats lead the victim to feel guilty and worried that they would "be responsible" if the abuser dies or gets hurt because they have left. So often the victim will remain with an abuser. Sometimes a battered individual receives help and support and decides to leave the abuser anyway. This is the most dangerous time for the victim.

The fatalities usually occurred after the victim tried to leave the abuser or obtained a Protection From Abuse Order, evicting the abuser from the home. This is because when a victim leaves an abuser, their fear of losing control over the victim may cause the abuser to go "over the edge". When an abuser is suicidal the possible consequences of committing a homicide are removed. Then for the abuser there is no possibility of life in prison, the death sentence or living with guilt and remorse. If you are a victim of domestic violence or you know someone else who is, remember to take all threats seriously and seek help to remain safe.



**Churches:**

Beechtree Union Church  
 First Baptist Church  
 First Christian Church  
 First Church of God  
 First United Methodist Church  
 Steffey United Methodist Church  
 First United Methodist Church  
 Valier United Methodist Church

**Groups:**

Cloe Womens Christian Society  
 Flowing Waters Outreach  
 Henderson Grange 1315  
 Mahoning Grange 1732  
 Mapleview PTO  
 Mary Brown Bridge Club  
 Nimble Thimble Quilters  
 Punxsutawney Rotary Club  
 Ringgold Methodist Youth Fellowship

**Businesses:**

Brookville Hospital  
 County Market  
 Jefferson Grocery

# Thank You!

**Top Volunteers:**

Merlena Collins  
 Cheryl Hamner

**Individuals:**

Larissa B.  
 Carmen R. Bickings  
 Carol Blair  
 James Bowser  
 Linda Bradley  
 Debbie Catanzarito  
 Carla Cherry  
 Nancy Demotte  
 Deborah DeVittorio  
 Sylvia Felt  
 Renee Gressler  
 Laverne Hooks  
 Nancy Jackson  
 Catherine Johnson  
 Pat Long  
 Angela Lotito  
 Maria Lotito  
 Louise Mahoney  
 Christina Mallick  
 Judy McKillip  
 Jim Milligan  
 Carolyn Motter  
 Michelle Muth  
 E. Jean Parker  
 John Raniowski  
 Karen Roy  
 Heather Rodgers  
 Walter and Mary Smith  
 David Spencer  
 Shirley A. Steiner  
 Patricia Strawn  
 Trisha Tyler  
 Barbara Williams  
 Peggy Work  
 Mary Young

**Crossroads Shelter Needs:**

Area rugs – blue, brown and tan  
 Bath towels and wash cloths  
 Baking pans  
 Boxed food  
 Cleaning supplies  
 Disinfectants supplies  
 Coffee, tea and hot chocolate  
 Cookware  
 Diapers and Pull-ups – size 3 & up  
 Dish soap  
 Dish cloths, towels and pot scrubbers  
 DVD player  
 First aid items  
 Flashlights & batteries  
 Floor cleaners  
 Food storage/freezer bags  
 Food storage/freezer containers  
 Garbage bags – all sizes  
 Gas gift cards  
 Gift certificates for local restaurants  
 Intercom system  
 Juices - canned or frozen  
 Laundry supplies – detergent, dryer sheets, laundry baskets  
 Light bulbs – 60 watt, night lights and energy savers  
 Medicines – over the counter cold medicines and pain reliever, adult and child  
 Meat – Beef, Pork and Chicken  
 Paper plates & bowls  
 Pillows (bed) and pillow cases  
 Plastic cups – disposable and regular  
 Plastic Totes (Large)  
 Paper towels  
 Silverware – regular and plastic  
 Stamps  
 Stereo system  
 Toilet paper  
 Twin size sheet sets  
 Wal-Mart gift cards

**YOU CAN HELP!**

- Make a memorial donation to remember a loved one
- Learn about domestic violence by attending Crossroads volunteer classes
- Volunteer your time
- Make a monetary donation
- Sponsor a family for a holiday meal, holiday gifts or school clothes
- Contact Crossroads staff to learn more about the many ways you can help

# CROSSROADS CONNECTION

ATTN: Crossroads Project  
Community Action, Inc.  
105 Grace Way  
Punxsutawney, PA 15767-1209

## CROSSROADS CONNECTION

814-849-2779 Brookville area  
814-938-3580 Punxsutawney area

24-hour hotline  
toll free 1-800-598-3998

814-371-1223 DuBois area  
814-768-7200 Clearfield area

### Crossroads Project Advisory Council Membership 2008-2009

Anthony Gigliotti, Council Chair  
Bobbi Reitz, Council Vice Chair  
Granville Carter, Board Representative  
Jane Ann Spencer, Secretary/Treasurer  
Shirley Buterbaugh, Volunteer Representative  
Lorna Reig, Volunteer Representative

Robert A. Cardamone  
Steven Berfield  
Jeanne Caldwell  
Nancy Lombardo  
John Raniowski  
Victoria Blowers

This document was financed in part by the federal department of Health and Human Services, under the Administration of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development; the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence; the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; Jefferson County Children and Youth Services; the Brookville Area United Fund; the Clearfield Area United Way; the DuBois Area United Way and other means of local support.

