

AB 589 (Levine) Addresses Teen Dating and Sexual Violence by Requiring Schools to Respond

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Teen dating and sexual violence is an ignored epidemic in California schools.

- Twenty to 33 percent of teens will experience abuse in a dating relationship.ⁱ
- Nearly 1.5 million high school students report physical dating violence each year.ⁱⁱ
- Young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rates of non-fatal intimate partner violence.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Teen dating violence is associated with high-risk behaviors, such as carrying a weapon to school, drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, unhealthy weight gain or loss, high absenteeism, and low grades.^{iv}
- Studies show that nearly half of teen dating violence victims experience some dating abuse on school campus.^v

The California Constitution requires schools to provide a safe campus for students.^{vi} Although schools often address gangs, bullying and sexual harassment, teen dating and sexual violence has been largely overlooked as a source of violence on campus. Most importantly, schools do not know how to respond to teen dating violence or they respond in a way that endangers the students. Legislative action is needed to address this public health issue and to curtail the effects of teen dating and sexual violence on students and schools.

WHAT DOES THIS BILL DO?

- Defines teen dating and sexual violence.
- Creates a Statewide Task Force on Teen Dating and Sexual Violence to develop a model protocol and resources for school response.
- Establishes the minimum requirements for school district teen dating violence protocols.
- Requires school security and police officers to enforce protective orders on campus.
- Requires that school districts notify parents/guardians about their teen dating and sexual violence policy and protocol.
- Requires that schools maintain victims' confidentiality when investigating or responding to a complaint of teen dating and/or sexual violence.
- Promotes collaboration between school districts and local teen dating and sexual violence advocates in order to train school district employees on how to respond to teen dating and sexual violence.
- Charges the Commission on Teacher Credentialing with the development of a teacher credential requirement on domestic, teen dating and sexual violence.
- Requires that the next revision of the student health curriculum include an independent unit on teen dating and sexual violence.
- Includes teen dating and sexual violence as mandatory topics in comprehensive sex education for students.

AB 589 Increases School Safety By:

- Providing protections and resources for teenage victims of dating and sexual violence
- Creating minimum training standards on teen dating and sexual violence for teachers, administrators, and staff
- Requiring schools to respond to complaints of dating and/or sexual violence
- Encouraging collaboration between schools and local victims' advocate groups

SPONSORS/CONTACTS

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ⁱ Carolyn Halpern, *Partner Violence Among Adolescents in Opposite-Sex Romantic Relationships: Findings from the national Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health*, 91 Am. J. Pub. Health 1679, 1679 (2001).

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Physical Dating Violence Among High School Students, United States, 2003*, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 2006/55(19): 532-35.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Special Report: Intimate Partner Violence and Age of Victim, 1993-1999* (Oct. 2001).

^{iv} Girls, Incorporated., *Girls and Violence, Facts*, May 2004.

^v Christian Molitor and Richard Tolman, *Gender and Contextual Factors in Adolescent Violence*, Violence Against Women, Vol. 4(2) (1998): 180-94.

^{vi} Cal. Const. Art. I, § 28