



Quarterly E-Newsletter

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Chair's Column

Dear Colleagues,

As the new Chair of the ABA Commission on Domestic Violence, I am honored to bring you this edition of the Commission's E-Newsletter, focusing on the epidemic of teen dating violence in October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Recent surveys of high school students indicate that they experience the highest rates of domestic violence. Nearly 1 in 5 teenage girls who have been in a relationship report that their boyfriend threatened violence or self-harm when presented with a breakup.¹ Thirteen percent (13%) of teenage girls who have been in a relationship report being physically hurt or hit.² Forty percent (40%) of teenage girls ages 14 to 17 say they know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend. Between 30 and 50% of female high school students report having experienced teen dating violence. These high rates of dating violence among teens raise unique challenges for legal service providers.

¹ Liz Claiborne Inc., Study on Teen Dating Abuse, Teenage Research Unlimited, www.loveisnotabuse.com (February 2006).

² Id.

We are extremely fortunate to have articles for this E-Newsletter written by national experts, and designed to provide practical information on how to effectively provide legal services to victims of teen dating violence. Our first article is contributed by Stephanie Nilva, Executive Director of Day One, a non-profit that partners with New York City youth to end dating abuse and domestic violence through community education, legal advocacy, supportive services and leadership development. *It's Hard Out Here For a Teen: Responding to Dating Abuse and Domestic Violence Among Youth*, provides us with an essential understanding of the unique challenges and barriers faced by victims of teen dating violence, and specific information on how to better respond to these challenges. Then, Juley Fulcher, Public Policy Director and Director of the Washington, DC office of Break the Cycle, a national non-profit with a mission to engage, educate, and empower youth to build lives and communities free from domestic and dating violence, summarizes and analyzes the new legal protections available to victims of teen dating violence through the Violence Against Women Act of 2005. This article includes invaluable information about new funding streams as well as changes in federal civil and criminal laws. Finally, in reprinting *Evaluating Legal Remedies for Teens in Abusive Dating Relationships*, by Catherine Klein and Karen Cunningham in [The Impact of Domestic Violence on Your Legal Practice, 2nd Edition 2004](#), we provide you with a quick reference tool for attorneys in their daily practice in representing teen survivors of dating violence.

In addition to these informative and insightful articles, this edition of the E-Newsletter also includes a list of the events that the Commission has planned in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, as well as a calendar of upcoming training opportunities for attorneys. We hope that you will consider attending one of our upcoming trainings.

As always, the Commission welcomes information from you regarding resources or promising practices in serving teen victims of dating and sexual violence. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you for your work on behalf of survivors and their children.

The Honorable Pamila Brown
Chair, ABA Commission on Domestic Violence

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