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Teen Center

Teen Dating Violence Technical Assistance Center

Break the Cycle
Empowering Youth to End
Domestic Violence



Interpersonal Violence and Teen Pregnancy:

Implication and Strategies for
Community-Based Interventions



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Mission: To engage, educate and empower youth to build lives and communities free from domestic and dating violence.

Vision: We envision a world in which young people are empowered with the rights, knowledge and tools to achieve healthy, nonviolent relationships and homes.



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Purpose: Unite the nation to end teen dating violence by sharing knowledge, building collaborative relationships and providing communities with the tools to implement effective youth-targeted services.

Webinar Goals:

- Promote a multi-disciplinary dialogue;
- Identify unique challenges and complexities presented by teen dating violence;
- Develop strategies for effective youth prevent and intervention.



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Programs

Webinar

Using the latest technology, quarterly webinars feature national experts who will provide critical training and encourage dialogue about a wide range of topics related to teen dating violence.

Master Class

In-person advanced trainings will be held annually to bring together grantees for in-depth training designed to improve the skills of professionals who work with youth.

Issue Briefs

Single-topic issue briefs will provide a written analysis of issues related to teen dating violence for reference and training in the grantees' local communities.

Legislative Alert

Quarterly legislative alerts will update grantees on relevant changes to the law that affect the provision of services to teen at both the federal and state level.

List-Serve

An active list-serve will be maintained to support continuing dialogue among grantees and provide a place for dissemination for critical information relevant to teen dating violence

Workbook Series

An interactive workbook series will provide tangible and targeted tools to grantees to effectively respond to youth in their respective fields, including law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and victim services.



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Collaborative Partners

Institute on Domestic Violence and the African American
Community

www.dvinstitute.org

National Center for Victims of Crime

www.ncvc.org

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape

www.pcar.org

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

www.ncjfcj.org



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- Questions, polling and survey.



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Contact Teen Center

(202) 824-0707

For more information on our future webinars

teencenter@breakthecycle.org

For technical assistance with matters related to teen dating
violence

expert@breakthecycle.org

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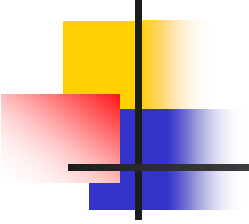
Break the Cycle
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Presented by:

Joyce N. Thomas, RN, MPH, PNP,
FAAN

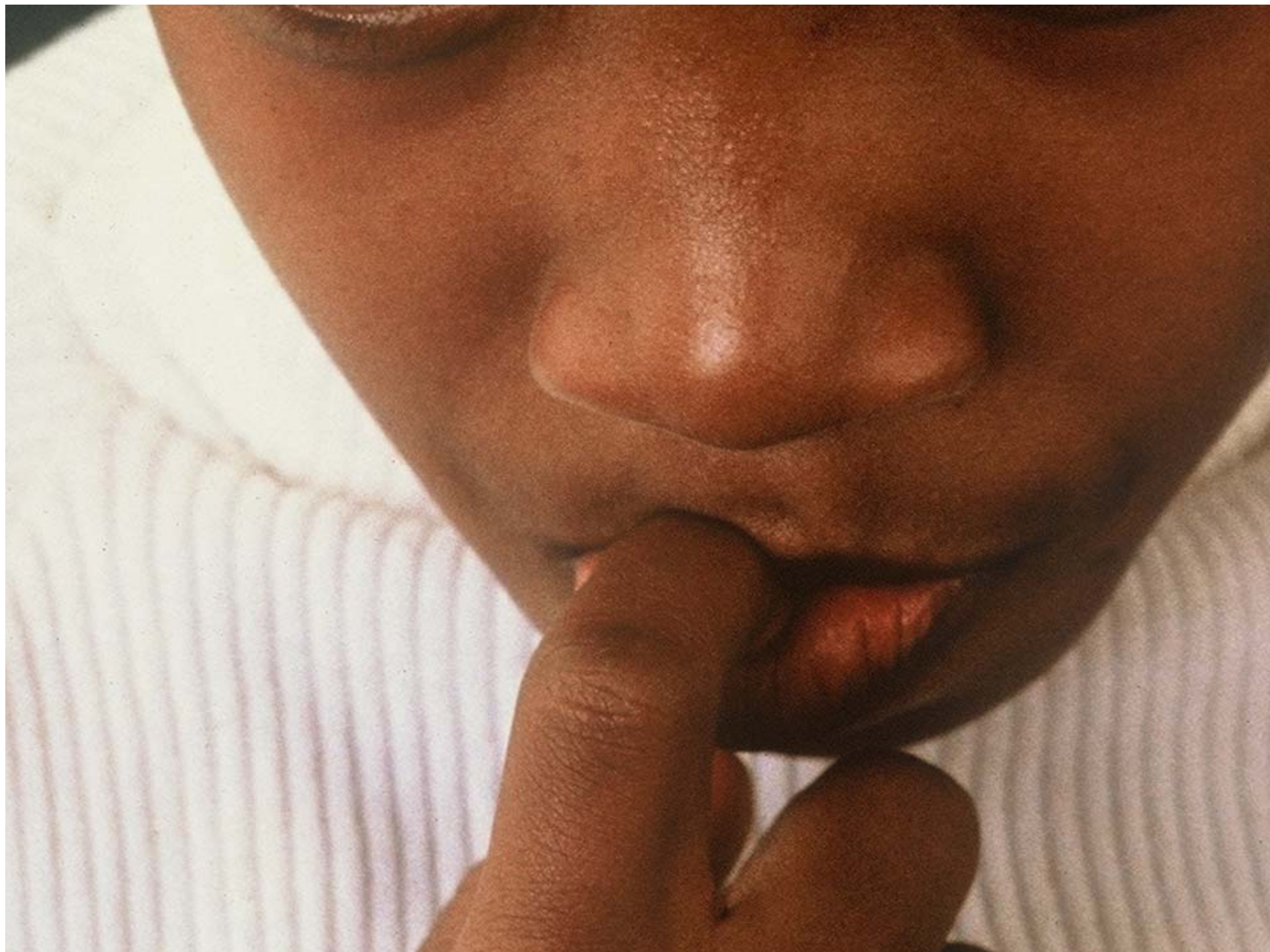
Center for Child Protection and Family Support, Inc
Washington, DC

Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American
Community



Why it is important to discuss interpersonal violence (IPV) and teen pregnancy:

- IPV during pregnancy is a common and dangerous reality for teens.
- There is a need to enhance sensitivity of victim service providers about the emotionally fragile pregnant teen.
- It is critical to understand common health problems associated with teen pregnancy and interpersonal violence such as physical injuries, high-risk pregnancy and complications, depression, and other emotional challenges which can occur.





Goals of the Training

- To increase knowledge, skills and understanding about interpersonal violence and teen pregnancy.
- To identify red flags or warning signs.
- To gain insight about the struggles experienced by pregnant teens and the implications on their ability have healthy pregnancy outcomes.
- To improve strategies for practice, interventions and policies.
- To enhance awareness about collaborations with community resources.



Overview of the Problem

- Interpersonal violence is intricately intertwined with teen pregnancy.
- Data indicates that approximately 88 percent of pregnancies to teens 15 to 19 years old, are unintended.
- It is estimated that two-thirds of young women who become pregnant as teens were sexually and/or physically abused at some point in their lives– either as children, in their current relationship, or both.
- A large number (50-80%) of teen moms are in violent, abusive, or coercive relationships just before, during and after their pregnancy.
- Younger teens are more likely to be victims of IPV than older teens.
- IPV can cause emotional and physical harm for both mothers and babies.

Source: Leiderman, S.& Almo C. (2006) "Interpersonal Violence and Adolescent Pregnancy, Center for the Assessment and Policy Development, Conshohocken, PA.



Statistics Tell Us:

- Teen pregnancy is a potential sign of sexual abuse— research documents that 66% of pregnant teens report a history of sexual abuse.
- One study found that out of 535 pregnant teenagers, 44 percent had been raped, with 11 percent becoming pregnant as a result of the rape.



Continued Statistics:

- Violence during pregnancy often continues into the postpartum period. In a study involving 570 teens, 75 percent of the teens who reported violence during pregnancy also reported violence two years postpartum.



Continued Statistics

- Pregnant teens are at much higher risk of dying or have serious medical complications such as high-blood pressure, premature delivery, anemia and toxemia.
- Infants born to teens are 2-6 times more likely to have low birth weight than those born to mothers age 20 or older.



Pathways Linking Dating Violence and Adolescent Pregnancy.

- The teen can become pregnant as a result of the dating violence or incest.
- The teen can become pregnant as a result of birth control sabotage.
- The teen may be depressed and self-medicate with drugs or alcohol, and increase the risks of violence and pregnancy.
- The teen may have learned the behavior of violence in their home.



Birth Control Sabotage

- Some men believe that a women who uses contraceptives must be “playing around;”
- Some men believe that keeping their partner pregnant and/or caring for young children makes it more difficult for the women to leave if she is unhappy in the relationship.



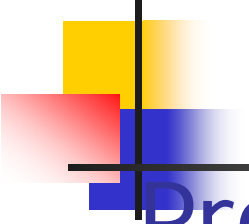
Perceptions and beliefs that can influence IPV in teens

Teen males may believe:

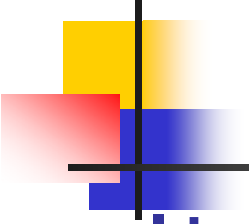
- they have privilege to “control” female partner
- being aggressive is “masculine”
- they “possess” their partner
- They don’t want to look “soft or weak”

Teen girls may believe:

- they must solve all the problems in a relationship
- boyfriend’s jealousy and abuse is “romantic.”
- abuse behavior is “normal” within their peer group
- there is no one to talk for help



Providers that come into contact with teen could benefit by being made aware of warning signs of potential violence.



It is important to recognize the role that violence, abuse, coercion, trauma, and victimization can play in the timing and nature of pregnancy.



Potential Warning Signs

- Extreme jealousy and controlling behavior during the pregnancy.
- Anger toward the pregnancy and pressure to terminate the pregnancy.
- Use of drugs and alcohol by teens in a dating relationship
- Use of forces during disagreements or arguments, especially over money issues, child care responsibilities, and intimacy.
- Partner may threatens the use of violence



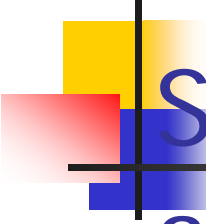
Red Flags/ Indicators

- Physical injuries reported or noticed in a pregnant teen.
- Anxiety and indecision when talking about the pregnancy and relationship with the father of the child.
- Frequent emotional outbursts and inability to control feelings.



Practice Suggestions

- Providers that interact with teen should consider screening for interpersonal violence repeatedly throughout the pregnancy and postpartum period.

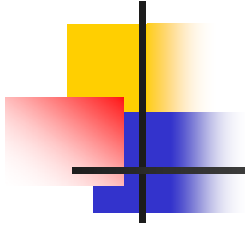


Screening is summarized in the acronym RADAR, which was developed by the Massachusetts Medical Society.



Steps in Screening and Intervention

- R- Routinely screen all pregnant teens
- A- Ask specific and direct questions in a caring and nonjudgmental manner.
- D- Document information about suspected IPV, if sexual abuse is disclosed and person is under 18 years, report immediately.
- A- Assess the clients safety
- R- Review options and provide referrals



All strategies aimed at IPV, teen pregnancy, parenting and prevention must use age, cultural, and victim-appropriate practices.



Challenges in a community-based for teens:

- Environmental factors (i.e., lives in a high crime community, poverty)
- Limited positive role model in the neighborhood.
- Access to alcohol, tobacco and drugs.
- Exposure to domestic violence in childhood.
- History of child maltreatment



Interventions: Implications for Providers

- Establish community-based program to help both males and females recognize IPV and abuse, oppression, and cultural tolerance for violence.
- Provide comprehensive sex education including strategies to avoid sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancy in a coercive, violent or abusive relationship.



Continuation:

- Provide supportive opportunities for males and females teens to discuss current or prior interpersonal violence experience.
- Have access to information about appropriate emergency and longer-term services for pregnant teens.



Coordinate interventions for pregnant teens:

- Health care
- Individual supportive counseling
- Peer group counseling
- Help-line phone contacts
- Legal Advocacy



Program Interventions in a Community Setting

- Programs must have trauma sensitive procedures in place specifically for pregnant teens.
- Have access to resources to promote healing and recovery.
- Offer ongoing and personal relationships to help pregnant teen follow-up, accept help, and understand the impact of disclosure.



How to Help:

- Let the teen talk about their feelings related to pregnancy and relationships.
- Provide accurate information about what to expect from systems.
- Provide support to improve communication skills
- Identify personal strengths of the teen
- Help the teen gain insight about the situation.
- Talk with the about their behavior.



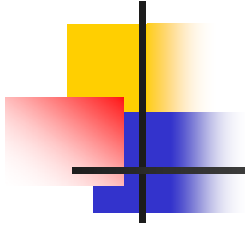
Factors to Consider When Working with Pregnant Teens

- Age
- Developmental stage
- Cognition
- Temperament
- Coping ability and style
- History and frequency of violence
- Perspective of the incident
- Attitude about seeking help



Pay Special Attention to:

- Emotional status of the pregnant teen
- Be aware of evidence of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder during pregnancy or post-partum period.
- Pregnant teens feelings about attachment to the newborn
- Hold perpetrator accountable for violent behavior



- Foster the development of healthy co-parenting relationships and strategies where possible and safe.
- Link teen parents to ongoing parenting, educational, employment, support services, and respite.



Advocacy Issues

- Provide sensitive approaches to issues of establishing paternity, child support enforcement, and other legal issues between teen parent and their partners—recognizing that these relationships are often violent, abusive, coercive, or unhealthy

Give the pregnant teen concrete
and accurate information





Data Sources:

Child Trends Fact Sheet

<http://www.childtrendsatabank.org>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2008). *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance- Atlanta, GA*

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/index.htm>

Adolescent pregnancy Information on Healthline

<http://www.healthline.com/adamcontent/adolescent-pregnancy/3>

Healthy Teen Network

<http://www.healthyteennetwork.org>

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Contact Information

E-mail

joyce@centerchildprotection.org

Website

www.stopchildabuse.org

Phone Number

(202) 544-3144 x 11

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