



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, the youth of New York are this State's most precious resource and greatest hope for the future, and ensuring their safety, well-being, positive development and growth into healthy citizens is a priority and responsibility we all share; and

Whereas, the transitional adolescent years present new challenges and choices for teens as they experience dating relationships for the first time and, unfortunately, associated pressures and expectations that can lead to abusive behavior; and

Whereas, teen dating violence, including physical, verbal and emotional abuse, sexual assault, and harassment via texting, email or "instant messaging" is a reality for many teenagers in New York and other states and, like drug abuse, it is a reality of which many parents and caregivers are unaware; and

Whereas, nationwide surveys examined teen dating relationships and experiences, and specific findings from these surveys include the following: 30% of teens in a dating relationship have been text-messaged 10-30 times an hour by a partner to find out where they are, what they are doing or who they are with, and yet 81% of parents either believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they don't know if it is an issue; and

Whereas, in New York State, 12.1% of high school students surveyed report that they were hit, slapped or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the previous 12 months and 8.6% were physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to; and

Whereas, studies also indicate that effects of violent relationships can be serious and put victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide and adult re-victimization; and

Whereas, New York has recognized the significance of addressing teen dating violence by many actions including the passage of a law that enables teens to obtain civil orders of protection against their abusers and since its inception in July 2008 more than 1,000 teens have availed themselves of this potentially life-saving measure, the development of public awareness campaigns addressing teens, friends and family, and, most recently, directing the New York State Domestic Violence Advisory Council to address teen dating violence within the systems of each of its members; and

Whereas, both Houses of the U.S. Congress have declared February as "National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month," and New York State joins in this observance by encouraging statewide youth, families, schools, law enforcement communities, government agencies, elected officials, civic organizations and other interested groups to show support for the organizations and individuals who provide critical advocacy and services and assistance to victims;

Now, Therefore, I, David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim February 2010 as

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

in the Empire State.



G i v e n under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this first day of
February in the year two thousand ten.

David A. Paterson

Governor

Lawrence Schwab
Secretary to the Governor