



People Against Domestic & Sexual Abuse

"Every Home a Safe Home"

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Students "Stand Up, Speak Out" About Dating Violence

(Watertown, WI) Watertown High School students are getting a financial shot in the arm to help them launch a public education campaign that raises awareness of dating violence and the resources available to help victims of dating violence.

More than 170 organizations applied to participate in the Youth Outreach for Victim Assistance (YOVA) program during the 2006-2007 school year and Watertown High School Peer Helpers group was selected by the National Crime Prevention Council and the National Center for Victims of Crime as one of 32 sites nationwide to receive funding to develop a campaign addressing dating violence. The grant was co-written by People Against Domestic & Sexual Abuse (PADA) and the Jefferson County Delinquency Prevention Council.

Starting the first week in October Watertown High School students will see the anti-dating violence message "Stand Up, Speak Out" on bracelets, on posters in the hallway, and on T-shirts specially designed and worn by the Peer Helpers group. Parents will also see these messages in football and basketball game programs. "Teenagers trust and respect their peers so public outreach campaigns designed by

teens are an excellent way to get the word out about dating violence,” says Tammy Foerster, Watertown High School Social Worker and Peer Helper Program Advisor.

It is estimated that about one in three high school students have been or will be involved in an abusive relationship. Teen dating violence most often takes place in the home of one of the partners. “Dating violence is a problem we all must face together; students, parents, teachers, and community members,” says Lindsay Blumer, PADA executive director. “Together we can create awareness, find solutions, and someday end dating violence.”

In August, youth and adult participants in YOVA joined others from 24 states including Alabama, Alaska, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New York, and Texas at the YOVA national training in Pittsburgh, PA. Representatives from Watertown included Elle Harvey-Serflek, Alicia Cataldo, and parent Sally Harvey. Training participants learned about teen victimization and created mock campaigns with press releases, skits, brochures, public service announcements, and posters. “We learned so much and heard so many inspiring stories from past project participants. We couldn’t wait to share all the information with the Peer Helpers group and get started on our campaign!” said Elle.

The Watertown High School Peer Helpers group will work with PADA throughout the 2006-2007 school year to implement the “Stand Up, Speak Out” campaign. For more information contact PADA at 920-674-6748.

YOVA receives support from the Office for Victims of Crime, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs (OJP). For more information about OJP consult its website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov. For more information about the

National Crime Prevention Council, visit www.mcpc.org. For more information about the National Center for Victims of Crime, visit www.ncvc.org.

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