



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

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## **February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month**

LANSING, Mich.— During February's Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is urging Michiganders to learn and recognize the signs of dating violence.

MDHHS also wants residents to understand the impact teen dating violence perpetrators have on their current or former intimate partners and recognize the importance of empowering everyone to learn about and seek support for victims and interventions for perpetrators. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has proclaimed February as [Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month in Michigan](#).

Nearly 1.5 million high school students in the United States are physically abused by dating partners every year, yet only 33 percent of teenage dating abuse victims disclose the abuse. Forty three percent of college women and 28 percent of college men report experiencing either abuse or controlling behaviors in a dating relationship.

"As a state, we must do more to reduce the prevalence of teen dating violence. The earlier we intervene with young perpetrators, the more likely we are to prevent future victimization," said MDHHS Director Robert Gordon. "The State of Michigan is dedicated to holding perpetrators accountable and employing all necessary measures to reduce their risk and harm to victims."

Dating violence perpetrators cause significant and long-lasting trauma to countless victims by intentionally using a pattern of physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, and economic coercion and abuse to control their intimate partners.

"All Michiganders can play a part in ending teen dating violence," said Debi Cain, executive director of the [MDHHS Division of Victim Services](#). "As caring parents, family, friends, classmates, educators, coaches and co-workers, we can educate ourselves about this critical issue and direct youth to supportive services."

Anyone in an abusive relationship who needs support can call the Teen Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474 or text "loveis" to 22522. To find a local domestic violence or sexual assault program provider, visit the [Michigan Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence website](#). Sexual assault survivors can call [855-VOICES4](#) for support and referrals.

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