

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM FEAR AND ABUSE

If you have questions or would like to speak to a lawyer about the different options available to you to protect yourself and prevent further abuse, please contact **Legal Momentum** at 212.925.6635, by e-mail to peo@legalmomentum.org, or by visiting us on the Web at www.legalmomentum.org/teens.

Legal Momentum is the nation's oldest legal advocacy organization dedicated to advancing the rights of women and girls. Our Teen Dating Abuse Program is made possible by the generous support of the Skadden Fellowship Foundation.

OTHER SERVICES THAT CAN HELP:

- **TEEN DATING ABUSE HELPLINE**
1.866.331.9474
(24 hours/day, 7 days/week)
www.loveisrespect.org
Live chat with peer advocates is available on the website from 5pm-1am EST, 7 days a week. The website also has many resources for teens on how to address dating abuse.
- **DAY ONE**
212.566.8120
(M-F, 9-5)
www.dayoney.org
Day One is the only organization in New York working exclusively on teen dating abuse. Day One provides legal assistance to youth in abusive relationships, and offers community education presentations for youth.
- **NYC DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE**
1.800.621.4673
(24 hours/day, 7 days/week)
Call for information about domestic violence shelter availability in the New York area, and domestic violence assistance of all kinds.
- **NYC GAY & LESBIAN ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT**
212.714.1141
(24 hours/day, 7 days/week)
www.avp.org
A crime victim service agency for the lesbian, gay, transgendered, bisexual, and HIV affected communities. AVP offers free and confidential support to victims of bias crimes, domestic violence, pick-up crimes, police misconduct, HIV-related violence, rape, and sexual assault.

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This pamphlet contains legal information, but it should not be considered legal advice and is not a substitute for speaking with a lawyer. If you need legal advice and representation please call Legal Momentum's hotline: (212) 925-6635.

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DOES YOUR BOYFRIEND OR GIRLFRIEND:

- Tell you who you can and can't hang out with?
- Always put you down or tell you're worthless?
- Constantly text or IM you to check on where you are?
- Pressure you to do things sexually that you don't want to do?
- Hit, push, slap, or kick you?
- Pressure you not to use condoms or birth control?
- Mess with your birth control or throw it away?
- Threaten to hurt you or themselves if you break up with them?

YOU MAY BE EXPERIENCING DATING ABUSE

WHAT IS DATING ABUSE?

Dating abuse is a pattern of behavior in an intimate or romantic relationship where one person tries to control the relationship through the use of force, intimidation or fear.

Dating abuse can be:

- **PHYSICAL:** hitting, kicking, choking, punching, scratching, biting, using a weapon, throwing objects, restraining the other person from moving
- **SEXUAL:** pressuring for sex, unwanted kissing or touching, not letting the other person use birth control, forcing the other person to go further than they want to sexually, rape
- **VERBAL/EMOTIONAL:** isolating the other person from friends and family, making the victim feel responsible for the violence, threatening to hurt one's self or others in order to manipulate the victim, threats to expose the victim's secrets, constant put downs and insults, yelling and screaming
- **FINANCIAL:** buying the victim a cell phone to keep tabs on him/her, using gifts after violence to "make up for" the abuse

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SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

AT SCHOOL

If you go to a New York City public high school, and staying at your school would be unsafe, you can request a **safety transfer** to another school. If the incident happens at school the school will investigate, and then notify the student's parents of the right to transfer. If the transfer is requested because of a criminal incident that happened off-campus the victim's parents can request a transfer from the principal. The school will conduct an investigation, and if the incident was criminal the school will require a copy of a police report.

If anyone who goes to your school has sexually harassed or assaulted you at school, you can file a **sexual harassment complaint**. You can report the harassment to the staff member the principal has designated for sexual harassment complaints. That staff member will report the harassment to the principal. If the principal believes the behavior was criminal he/she will call the police. The principal will investigate the allegation, and will call both the victim's and the harasser's parents. If the principal determines that there was harassment, the harasser will be punished.

IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM

If your boyfriend/girlfriend has physically or sexually assaulted you, you can **call the police**. Once the police are called they are required to investigate. The police will ask you to write and sign a statement about what happened. If the police believe that a domestic or dating violence incident has occurred they are required to arrest the perpetrator, regardless of whether the victim wants him/her arrested or not.

You can also go to Family Court and get a **civil order of protection (OP)** against your abuser. An OP is a document that limits the behavior of the abuser. An OP can order the abuser to refrain from harassing or assaulting the victim, that the abuser not contact or speak to the victim, or that the abuser stay a certain distance away from the victim. It is always a good idea to speak to an advocate or lawyer before you get an OP to talk through issues like safety planning and what your abuser might do when he is served with the OP. To get an OP go to the family court in your borough. The clerk will give you forms to fill out, and then a judge will decide whether to grant you a temporary order of protection. The order of protection will only become final after there is a hearing before a judge where both you and the abuser are present.



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