

The River

A PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

*Leading Efforts to End
Domestic Violence for
over 30 Years*

FEBRUARY 2012

Go Purple this February: National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month



Love

should be fun & exciting.

Inside:

- Prevention Toolkit
- Letter from President Gloria Terry
- Student Health Advisory Council Toolkit
- Useful Information for Your Go Purple Teen Efforts



Over Thirty Years of Building a Safer Texas

Meet Samantha.

This is my smart, precocious, beautiful, many-sided 11-year-old daughter. We took this picture when I attended a conference and she joined the Young Advocate track a couple of years ago. I cannot believe she is 11.



Like most children of women and men who do this work, Sam has grown up attending candlelight vigils and DV fundraisers, and seeing the stark realities of women and children in shelter because home is not safe.

Back when I was privileged to serve as the executive director of a local shelter, I thought of Sam when I met battered women who sought services and shelter. Moms and children Sam's age – she was seven then – came to us often in the middle of the night with little more than the clothes on their backs. During my time in that position, I worked alongside dedicated and talented advocates to offer hope and safety to thousands of women, children and families. These efforts at intervening, once family violence occurred, proved to be simultaneously daunting, rewarding, and personally life altering. In my current position and personal life I think back daily on my work in shelter.

Now in our work to spread and champion prevention activities across Texas, I am beginning to think of Sam in a different way. As I say, Sam is now 11. She is not, however, your typical 11-year-old, mind you. Standing taller than I, with waist-long golden hair and a body in transformation, she looks closer to 14. As she matures into a teenager – despite her father's best efforts to put a stop to it – I realize that our efforts to foster healthy dating relationships for our youth will have a direct impact on Sam.

I have long believed in the need for prevention efforts, but now my professional and personal worlds have come together.

Respectfully yours,

Gloria Aguilerá Terry

February 2012 is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

February 2012 is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Now, for the first time, TCFV dedicates the entire issue of *The River* in observance. Take a look inside for information and resources to use in continuing your community activities.

We further our message with the motto Go Purple as a way to reconsider and recast the conversation around family and dating violence. Please see the map on page three. Counties shaded in white show where a young woman was killed; purple counties show no fatalities of young women. It comes down to a simple statement: We want all Texas to Go Purple.

In this issue of *The River*, we emphatically point to Prevention as a priority. We provide information on serving teen victims as opposed to youth victims: where to draw the line, our approaches in school with the newest legislation, loveisrespect.org, and much more.

“National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month reflects our Nation’s growing understanding that violence within relationships often begins during adolescence. Abusive relationships can impact adolescent development, and teens who experience dating violence may suffer long-term negative behavioral and health consequences.”

– 2011 Presidential Proclamation:

“Being a role model and athlete, you want to teach kids violence is not the way you respond. There’s a lot more you can do as a player to have an impact than just with your play.”

–Jason Witten, Dallas Cowboys Tight End

Number of Texas Young Women and Teens

Killed by an intimate partner from 2007 to 2010

41

Percentage of Texas high school students who experience dating violence

12-14%

Age by which 70% victims of intimate partner violence, stalking or rape experienced violence

25 years old

High school students in an abusive relationship

1 in 3

Female high school girls who know someone their age who has already experienced teen dating abuse

40%

Honoring Texas Young Women and Girls

Killed: 2007 – 2010

Claudia Rodriguez, 20
Lufkin, Angelina County

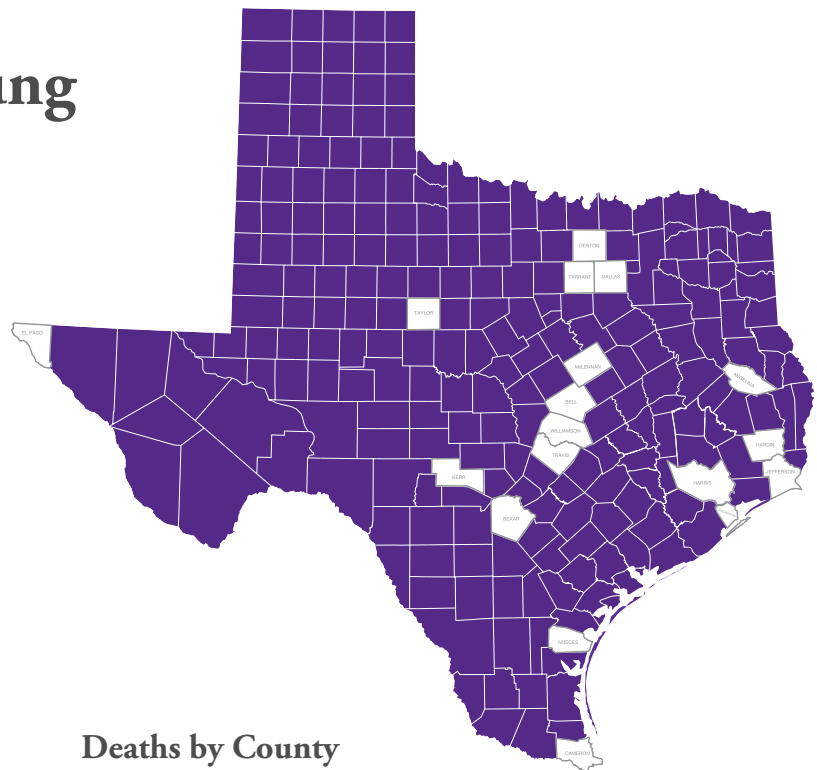
2/13/2007

“Claudia was found shot in her home. Claudia was pregnant at the time of her death, and her unborn baby died with her. Her live-in boyfriend Darrel D’juan Ivey, 21, was charged with capital murder.”

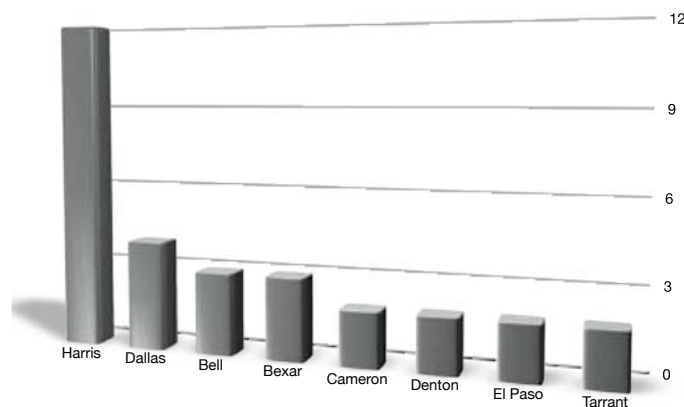
Tiffani Gonzalez, 14
Corpus Christi, Nueces County

4/4/08

“Tiffani was shot by her boyfriend Everett Duran, 15, and found in his mother’s apartment. Everett was tried as an adult and convicted of first-degree murder.”



Deaths by County



Go Purple Youth Solutions

A Message From The National Dating Abuse Helpline

Katie Ray -Jones, NDAH President

Young people affected by teen dating violence are not alone; they have a dedicated network of support on national, statewide, and local levels. The National Dating Abuse Helpline is committed to meeting people where they are: creating a confidential and safe space for expression, educating and assisting in exploring options, empowering next steps, and building a link between those affected by dating abuse and the resources surrounding them.

The National Dating Abuse Helpline is a multi-dimensional resource for teens and young adults who are experiencing dating abuse and people working on their behalf. The advocates on the Helpline, who are now available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, offer a wealth of information about healthy relationships, the dynamics of abuse, building support systems, and keeping victims safe. These critical services are offered to teens and young adults by advocates ages 16-28 years old. The website loveisrespect.org, a resource-packed collaboration between the National Dating Abuse Helpline and Break the Cycle, features a multitude of interactive components to empower and engage youth through information and education. In addition to offering support via phone, chat and the web, we are also pleased to announce that the Helpline has now extended its services through text! Teens can reach us by texting "loveis" to 77054.

Visiting loveisrespect.org allows young people to learn what a healthy relationship looks like before they begin dating so they can recognize the warning signs of an abusive or unhealthy relationship early. We are thrilled at the opportunity to work with teens and young adults

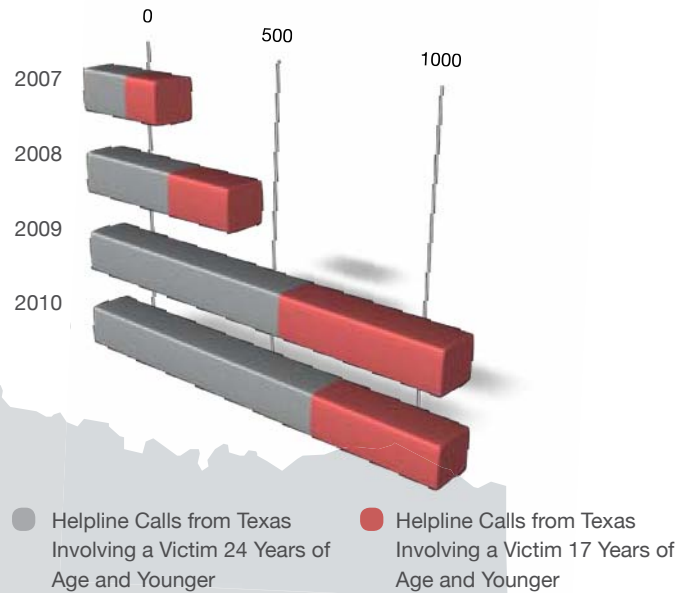
Sheltering Teens

Did you know that minors experiencing teen dating violence can access emergency shelter for 14 days and may even be able to stay longer depending on certain statutory requirements? Victims of teen dating violence can also seek the assistance of a licensed counselor. See Texas Family Code 32.201 and 32.202.

Counseling Teens

Texas law allows minor victims to access counseling from licensed counselors without consent from parents. See Texas Family Code Section 32.004.

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline Calls From Texas



to educate them so that they can engage in relationships in which they are treated with dignity and respect.

We know that direct services to teens often are complicated to navigate. Loveisrespect is an excellent referral for you to use. As a sister organization to the Texas Council on Family Violence, we stand alongside you.

Materials are readily available at our website.

2011 House Bill 2496

Signed by Governor 6/17/2011

Creates a teen dating violence court program that includes a 12-week course to educate children who engage in dating violence and encourage them to refrain from engaging in that conduct. This law also provides deferral of adjudication and dismissal of certain dating violence cases.

School Health Advisory Councils

In a continuing concerted effort to address prevention of intimate partner violence, TCFV worked during the 80th Session to accomplish a requirement for schools to develop teen dating abuse policies on campus. See Education Code Section 37.0831. During the 82nd Session, TCFV sought to further institutionalize schools' responses to dating abuse by effecting a change to the membership for School Health Advisory Councils (SHAC). SHACs represent a local collection of parents and other community members who offer recommendations to school districts on health curricula. SB 736 adds local domestic violence programs as permissive members of SHACs, thereby linking family violence experts and district health curricula as it relates to dating abuse.