

# TIMES-CALL

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009 | LONGMONT, COLORADO

No. 36

50 cents

## Help put an end to teen-dating violence

Teenagers are at serious risk of being involved in an abusive relationship. More teens are injured due to dating violence than any other crime affecting youths in Longmont. And, many more of our youths are verbally and emotionally abused by their partners, which can be more damaging than physical violence in many cases.

Dating violence is a pattern of controlling and abusive behavior. It can be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. Constant insults, isolation from friends and family and controlling behavior are all forms of dating violence. Constant texting and phone calls, spreading rumors, taking embarrassing pictures and spreading them around, as well as embarrassing postings on Facebook or MySpace pages can also be forms of abuse used as a way to control, monitor and blackmail a boyfriend or girlfriend.

This week is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week. Let's reach out and focus on our youths. Attitudes and behaviors are formed at this age. Talk about healthy and unhealthy relationships with the teenagers in your life.

If you know someone who is in an abusive relationship, be there for them. Guide them to resources that can assist. Visit [www.LongmontDomesticViolence.org](http://www.LongmontDomesticViolence.org) for helpful information and resources and links to teen dating violence Web sites. For non-emergency information and referrals, call LEVI at 303-774-4534. For counseling and shelter, call Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley at 303-772-4422. In an emergency, dial 911.

Please join me and others in our community and nationwide during this week, and the weeks, months and years ahead, to help end dating violence and domestic violence. You can help. We all can.

**CHERYL Q. SWANSON**  
Longmont Ending  
Violence Initiative (LEVI)