

TIMES-CALL

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2008 | LONGMONT, COLORADO

Help end violence

Our young people are at serious risk of being involved in a violent relationship. More teens are injured due to dating violence than any other crime affecting youth in Longmont. In fact, the Boulder County Domestic Abuse Prevention Project (DAPP) recently released statistics collected in the first half of 2007.

In those six months, 20 teenagers were listed as defendants and 27 teenagers were listed as victims in Boulder County. These are just the figures that relate to formal court cases in our county.

Imagine how many incidents were not reported.

In fact, 65 percent of all domestic violence formal cases in Boulder County in the first half of 2007 involved a relationship categorized as dating, living together, ex-dating or ex-living together. This means that the vast majority of domestic violence occurring in our community is happening to those who are not married.

This week is designated as 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 for a list of 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's crisis hotline 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 domestic violence.

You can help. We all can.

CHERYL SWANSON,
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Initiative (LEVI)
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