



MEDIA RELEASE

Criminal Justice Services

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Department Recognizes Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month

Ohio Family Violence Prevention Resource Center offers guidance to leaders, parents and teens

(COLUMBUS) – This month, the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS), a division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS), will recognize National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month is an effort to raise awareness about abuse in youth relationships and promote programs that prevent it during the month of February. It brings national focus to the issue of teen dating violence, highlights the need to educate youth about healthy relationships, raises awareness among those who care for them and provides communities with a critical opportunity to work together to prevent abuse.

"The Department is committed to providing resources to educate our youth, school systems and parents," said ODPS Director Thomas P. Charles. "It is important we do our part to assist in preventing this type of violence."

The Ohio Family Violence Prevention Center, housed at OCJS, serves as an information clearinghouse for public and private organizations as they provide assistance to victims and offers a variety of services such as providing victim advocacy/assistance, organizing workshops, giving presentations and conducting research on family violence and its impact on communities. The Ohio Family Violence Prevention Advisory Council, a part of the Center, is where Ohio's top experts in the prevention and intervention of domestic and family violence prevention come together to consider and recommend improvements in the state.

One in 11 teens reports being a victim of physical abuse each year and nearly three in four tweens (ages 11-14) report boyfriend/girlfriend relationships usually begin at age 14 or younger. Also, 62 percent of tweens who have been in a relationship say they know friends who have been verbally abused by a boyfriend/girlfriend and only half of all tweens claim to know the warning signs of a bad or hurtful relationship.

OCJS developed a Web site to assist parents and teens in recognizing the signs of dating violence and tips for when a relationship ends. To access this and other teen dating violence information, please visit:

http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/TDVMonth/TDVMonth_Home.htm

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