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Teen dating violence is #NotAPhase

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (Feb. 2, 2026) – Relationship-based violence can happen at all ages, including with teens. In fact, about one-third of US teens experience some form of abuse by their dating partner.

In recognition of this and Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, Hubbard House is launching a month-long campaign to raise awareness of the seriousness of this violence and how to support teen survivors right here in our community. The theme of the campaign is #NotAPhase, a two-fold message both to the community and to teen survivors.

For our community- the parents, mentors, teachers, coaches, and other adults in the lives of teens- this campaign encourages a new way of thinking about teen relationships. Adults sometimes see teen relationships as a phase, not serious, or something that won't last. This is in part influenced by the many different ways a teen will talk about their partner, like calling them a boyfriend, hook-up, casual thing, etc. An adult's perception also draws from their own experience- if they didn't take their own relationships as a teen seriously, they may assume the teen they're helping feels the same way.

If an adult thinks of a teen's relationship as "casual" or "just a phase," they may dismiss any concerns they have about the teen's partner, since they think the relationship won't last. The teen may also feel they can't talk to the adult, since the teen doesn't think the adult will take them seriously.

"A teen needs someone safe to talk to. If they come to you, listen and understand that the relationship is very real to them, and so is the danger. You can help save their life," says Hubbard House CEO Dr. Gail Patin.

Thinking the relationship isn't serious may also mean a teen abuser is not held accountable to their actions, because the situation is seen as "boys being boys" or "a little mistake by a good kid."

This campaign is also a direct message to any teen in an unhealthy or abusive dating relationship.

“Abusive behaviors are not a phase. You are not responsible for enduring the abuse or changing anyone- your only responsibility is to your own safety,” Patin says.

A teen abuser may try to make excuses for their behavior, like blaming stress, saying they care too much about the survivor, or making promises to change. There are many ways a teen may act unhealthy or abusive in a relationship, including

- Technology-based surveillance: Teen abusers will frequently use a survivor’s technology against them. They may track their partner’s location, obsessively monitor social media, and similar tactics. This can be done overtly, like through common location sharing apps, or covertly, like with fake social media accounts.
- Extreme jealousy: Whether through technology or in-person, teen abusers may constantly check on where their partner is and who they’re with. They will then accuse their partner of cheating, talking to people they shouldn’t be, acting inappropriately or similar things, all driven by the teen abuser’s jealousy and desire to control their partner.
- Peer manipulation: Teen abusers often try to convince their partner’s friends that they truly love their partner, or they make excuses for their own behavior that the friends may believe. A peer group has a large influence on a teen, so these actions by a teen abuser can leave the survivor feeling isolated.

Hubbard House can help teen survivors address immediate safety needs and learn how to connect with safe adults. We also have therapeutic programming for teen survivors, with parental consent. Any teen in Duval or Baker counties who needs free, confidential support can reach out to Hubbard House through the 24/7 Textline at 904-210-3698 or Hotline at 904-354-3114.

Hubbard House also works to prevent violence by educating children and teens about healthy relationships, conflict resolution, boundaries, emotional intelligence, and similar topics. Learn more about these free educational opportunities by emailing education@hubbardhouse.org.

To join Hubbard House this Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, share our #NotAPhase social media campaign on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). You can also join “Wear Orange Day”, by wearing orange- the color of teen dating violence awareness- on February 10th.

About Hubbard House:

[Hubbard House](#) is a full-service certified domestic violence center providing emergency shelter and supportive services to survivors of domestic violence and their families, in Duval and Baker counties in northeast Florida. Free, confidential support is available 24/7 through Hubbard House’s Hotline at 904-354-3114 and Textline at 904-210-3698.