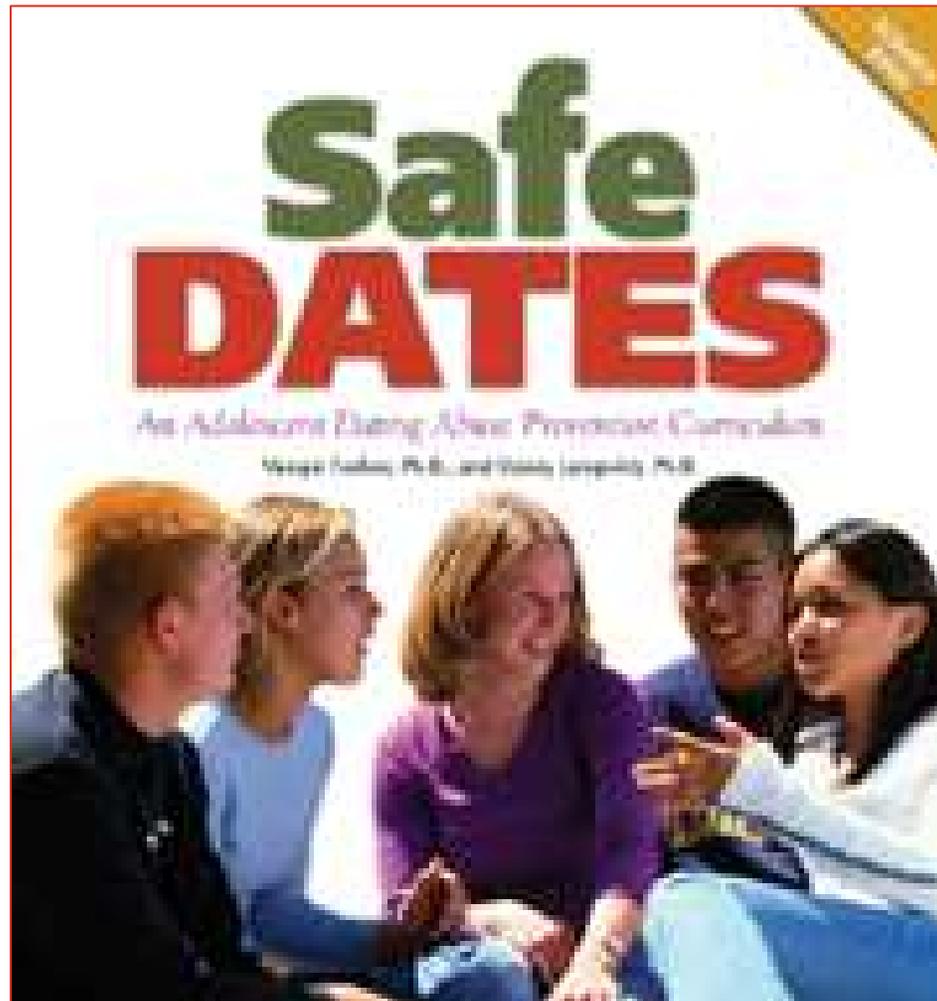


Adolescent Dating Abuse Prevention: The Safe Dates Program



Presentation Agenda

- Very briefly describe the problem of adolescent dating abuse
- Describe the Safe Dates Program
- Describe the randomized trial that tested the program's efficacy in preventing dating abuse
- Present results from that randomized trial
- Mention where Safe Dates is being used
- If there is time- briefly mention our research to develop and evaluate other adolescent dating abuse prevention programs

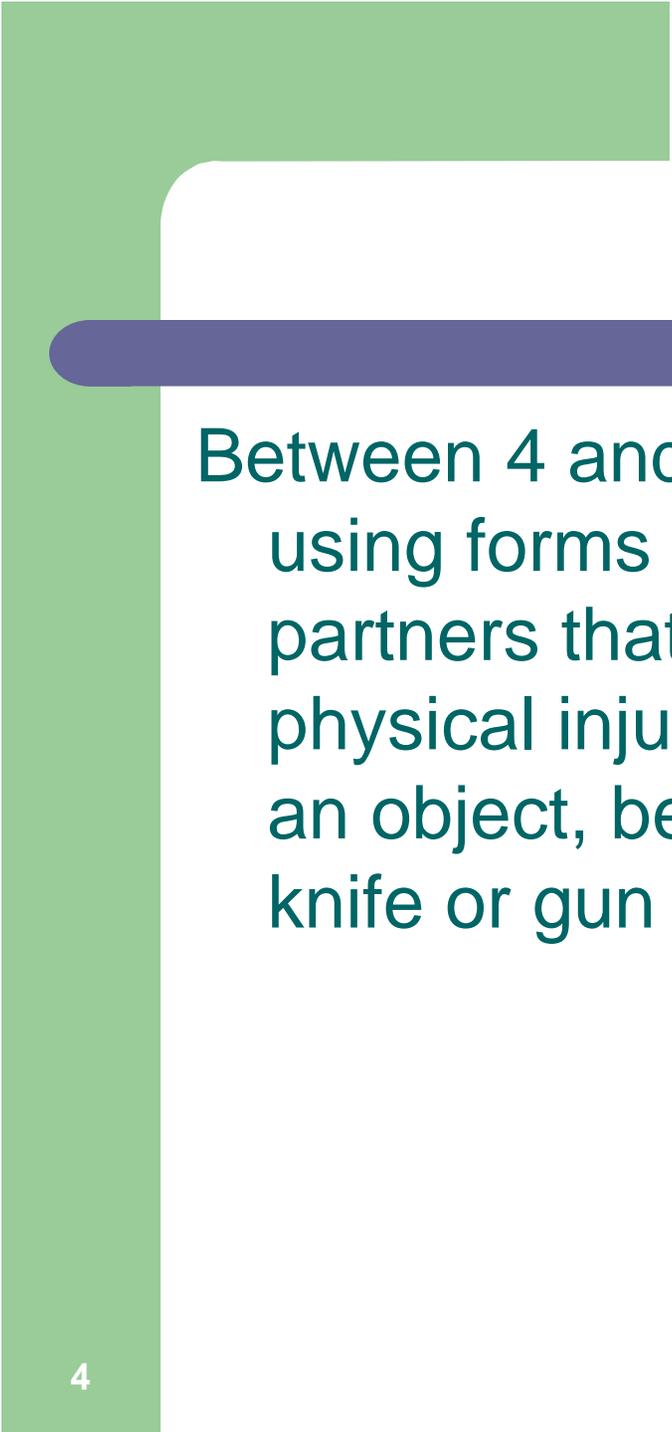
Selected Adolescent Dating Abuse Findings

National surveys report that:

Between 9% to 12% of adolescents have been physically abused by a date in the previous year (YRBS 2000, 2002, 2004).

29% have been psychologically abused by a date (Halpern et al., 2001).

Prevalence rates for sexual dating violence range widely (1% to 13% for forced sexual intercourse; 15% to 77% for other types of forced sexual activity)

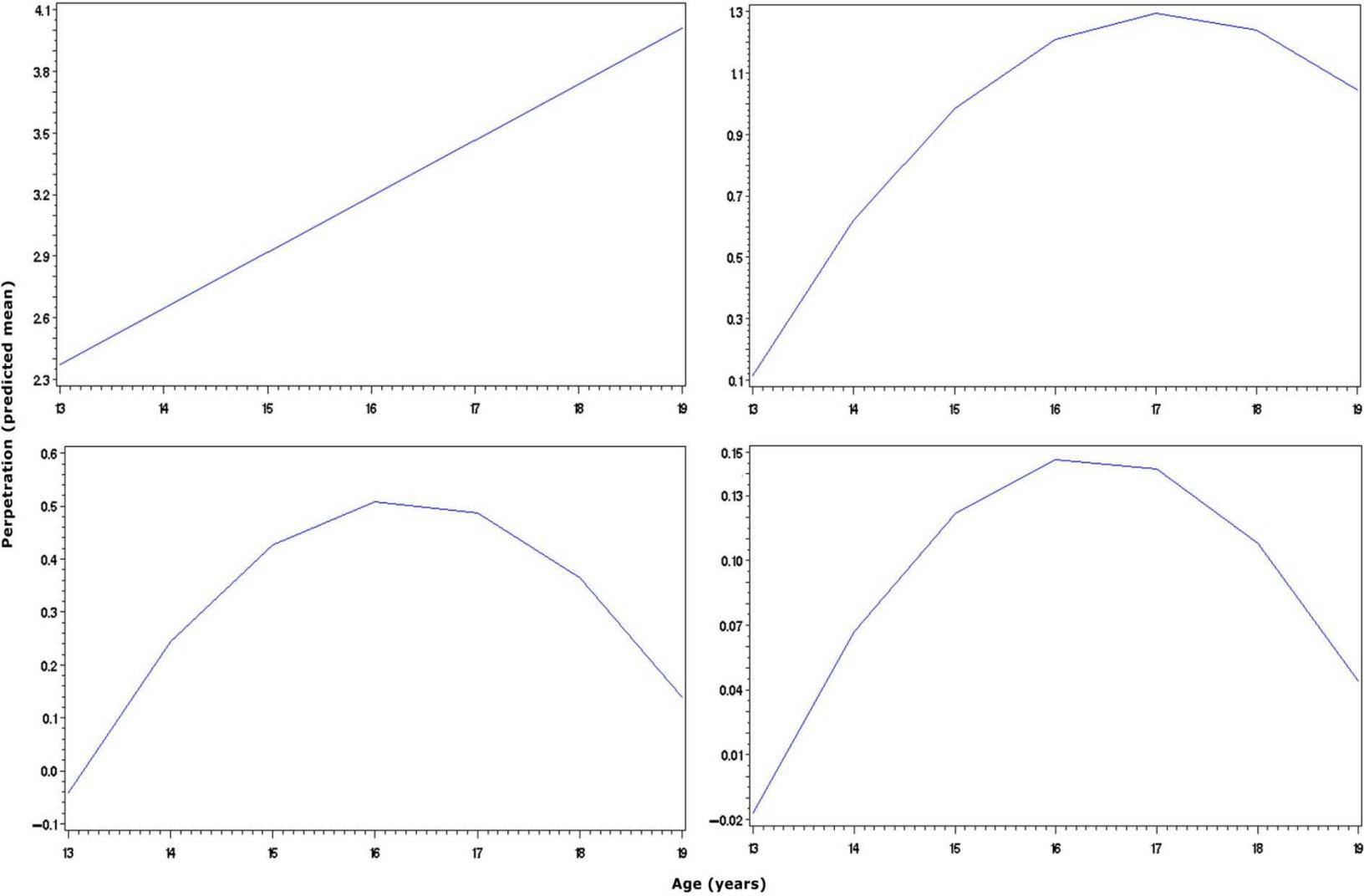


Between 4 and 14% of adolescents report using forms of violence against dating partners that are likely to result in serious physical injury, such as hitting a partner with an object, beating up a partner, and using a knife or gun against a partner

Sex differences (or similarities) in adolescent dating abuse

- Most studies of adolescent dating abuse report that girls are as likely or more likely to perpetrate dating abuse as boys.
- Consequences for boys of being a victim of dating abuse include depression, cigarette smoking, suicide ideation, suicide attempts.
- Consequences for girls of being a victim of dating abuse include depression, cigarette smoking, marijuana use, illicit substance use, suicide attempts, antisocial behavior.

Trajectories of dating abuse perpetration. Psychological abuse perpetration (top left) was linear, and moderate physical (top right), severe physical (bottom left) and sexual abuse perpetration (bottom right) were quadratic



Conclusion

Adolescent dating abuse is prevalent, results in severe consequences to the adolescent, and can set a pattern for having unhealthy and abusive adult relationships and therefore efforts at prevention are warranted.

The Safe Dates Program

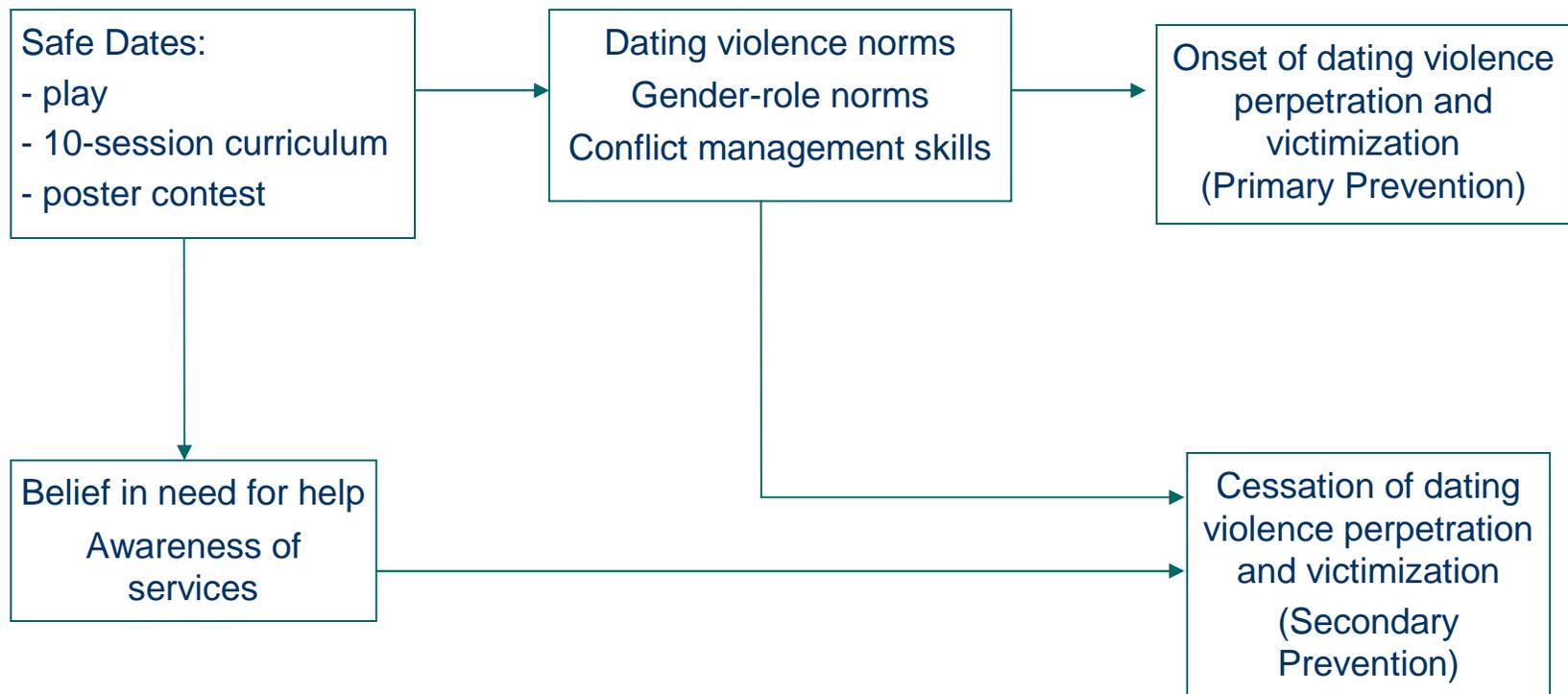
Safe Dates is a School-Based Program:

- A Play
- 10-session curriculum
- A poster contest

Characteristics of the Safe Dates Program

- Targets primary and secondary prevention
- Aimed at preventing both victimization and perpetration
- Considers both boys and girls to be potential perpetrators and victims
- Theoretically and empirically based

Safe Dates Conceptual Diagram



Topics Covered in the Safe Dates Curriculum

- Day 1: Defining caring relationships
- Day 2: Defining dating abuse
- Day 3: Why do people abuse?
- Day 4: How to help a friend
- Day 5: Helping friends
- Day 6: Images of relationships
- Day 7: Equal power through communication
- Day 8: How we feel? How we deal?
- Day 9: Sexual assault
- Day 10: The poster contest

The Evaluation of Safe Dates

Assessing the effects of the dating violence prevention program “Safe Dates” using random coefficient regression modeling

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Prevention Science, (2005), Volume 6, Number 3, Pages 245 – 258

Study Purposes

- Examine the effects of Safe Dates over time in preventing and reducing dating abuse victimization and perpetration
- Determine if program effects over time are due to primary or secondary prevention
- Determine if program effects over time vary by gender and race
- Determine if Safe Dates prevented dating abuse through the proposed mechanisms of change.

Study Methodology

- DESIGN:
 - Randomized Trial
 - Random allocation of all 14 schools with 8th and 9th graders in Johnston County NC to treatment and control conditions
 - 955 adolescents in treatment and 1010 in control
- STUDY CONDITIONS:
 - *Treatment condition:* School and community intervention
 - *Control condition:* Community intervention only

Data collection

- Baseline questionnaires (1,965 8th and 9th graders)
 - Safe Dates delivered in 7 treatment schools
- One-month follow-up data (grades 8 and 9)
- One-year follow-up data (grades 9,10)
- Two-year follow-up data (grades 10,11)
- Three-year follow-up data (grades 11,12)
- Four-year follow-up data (grades 12)

Sample Characteristics

- Of the 1,967 adolescents in our study:
 - 75.9% Caucasian
 - 20.2% African American
 - 3.9% other racial/ethnic groups
 - 50.4% female
 - Ages at baseline were 12-17 with the mean age being 13.9 years
 - At baseline, 72% reported having been on a date

Dating Abuse Behaviors that were Measured

- Perpetration
 - Psychological dating abuse perpetration (wave 1 alpha = .89)
 - Moderate physical dating abuse perpetration (alpha = .92)
 - Severe physical dating abuse perpetration (alpha = .89)
 - Sexual dating abuse perpetration (alpha = .86)
- Victimization
 - Psychological dating abuse victimization (alpha = .91)
 - Moderate physical dating abuse victimization (alpha = .90)
 - Severe physical dating abuse victimization (alpha = .86)
 - Sexual dating abuse victimization (alpha = .74)

Mediating Variables That Were Measured

- **Dating Violence Norms (8 items, alpha = .78)**
 - “It is ok for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she did something to make him mad”
 - Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree
- **Acceptance of Traditional Gender-Role Norms (11 items, alpha = .69)**
 - “In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making decisions”
 - Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree
- **Conflict Management Skills (7 items, alpha =.88)**
 - “During the last 6 months, when you had a disagreement with someone, how much of the time did you do the following things?” “I told the person how I felt,” “I tried to calm down before I talked to them”
 - 0 for “never” to 3 for “most of the time”

Measures for Mediating Variables (cont.)

- Belief in Need for Help (2 items)
 - “Teens who are victims of dating violence need to get help from others,” and “Teens who are violent to their dates need to get help from others”
 - Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree
- Awareness of Community Services (1 item)
 - An assessment of whether the adolescent knew about the services in their community for helping teenagers involved in abusive dating relationships

Statistical Analyses

- Random Coefficient Models SAS PROC MIXED
(SAS Version 8, 1999)

Modeling Procedures

Treatment

Gender

Race

Baseline outcome

Time

Time*Time

Treatment*gender

Treatment*race

Treatment*baseline outcome

Treatment*time*gender

Treatment*time*race

Treatment*time*baseline outcome

Treatment*time*time*gender

Treatment*time*time*race

Treatment*time*time*baseline outcome

Safe Dates Effects on Dating Abuse Perpetration

- Program effects were the same regardless of gender or minority status.
- There were significant program effects at all four follow-up periods on:
 - **psychological dating abuse perpetration** ($p = .0005$)
 - **moderate physical dating abuse perpetration** ($p = .02$)
 - **sexual dating abuse perpetration** ($p = .04$)
- There were both primary prevention and secondary prevention program effects on those three behaviors.

Safe Dates Effects on Dating Abuse Perpetration (cont.)

- Program effects on **severe physical dating abuse perpetration** varied by level of prior severe physical dating abuse perpetration
 - Positive program effects for adolescents with no or average amounts of severe physical dating abuse perpetration at baseline
 - No program effects for those who reported high amounts of severe physical dating abuse perpetration at baseline

Safe Dates Effects on Dating Abuse Victimization

- Program effects were the same regardless of gender or minority status.
- There were significant program effects at all four follow-up periods on **moderate physical dating abuse victimization** ($p = .01$)
- There was a marginal program effect on **sexual dating abuse victimization** ($p = .07$)
- There were both primary prevention and secondary prevention program effects on those two behaviors

Safe Dates Effects on Dating Abuse Victimization (cont.)

- There were no program effects at any of the four follow-up periods on:
 - **psychological dating abuse victimization** ($p = .17$)
 - **severe physical dating abuse victimization** ($p = .14$)

Program Effects on “Mediating” Variables

- There were significant program effects at all 4 follow-up periods on:
 - **dating violence norms** ($p = < .0001$)
 - **gender-role norms** ($p < .0001$)
 - **beliefs in need for help** ($p = .02$)
- The effects of the program on **awareness of community services** varied by follow-up period
- There were no program effects on **conflict resolution skills** at any of the follow-up periods ($p = .09$)

To Summarize

- **Significant positive program effects at all 4 waves on:**
 - **Psychological dating abuse perpetration**
 - **Moderate physical dating abuse perpetration**
 - **Severe physical dating abuse perpetration (if no severe DA prior to program exposure or if average amounts of severe DA prior to program exposure)**
 - **Sexual dating abuse perpetration**
 - **Moderate physical dating abuse victimization**
- **Marginal program effect ($p = .07$) at all 4 waves on:**
 - **Sexual dating abuse victimization**

Summary of Findings (cont.)

- Safe Dates had both primary and secondary prevention effects on these 6 outcomes.
- Safe Dates was equally effective for males and females and for white and minority adolescents.
- Program effects were evidenced as much as 3 years post intervention (and a later paper in AJPH showed effects lasted as much as 4 years post intervention).
- A later paper showed that in comparison to controls, adolescents exposed to Safe Dates reported from 56% to 92% less dating violence victimization and perpetration 4 years after exposure.

Summary of Findings (cont.)

- Program effects were mediated by changes in
 - Dating violence norms
 - Gender-role norms
 - Awareness of community services
- Program effects were not mediated by
 - Conflict management skills
 - Belief in need for help

Summary of Findings (cont.)

- Safe Dates did not, at any wave, prevent or reduce:
 - **Psychological dating abuse victimization**
 - **Severe physical dating abuse victimization**
 - **Severe physical dating abuse perpetration (if using high amounts of severe dating abuse perpetration prior to program exposure)**

Registries that Recognize Safe Dates as an Evidenced-Based Program

- Only adolescent dating violence prevention program designated as a *Model Program* by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Only dating violence prevention program listed in the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
- Described as an evidenced-based program on the Discovery Health Connection website produced by the Discovery Channel.
- Designated a “Level 1” (the top rating) program in the *Community Guide to Helping America’s Youth*
- Selected by the National Crime Prevention Council as one of their “50 Strategies to Prevent Violent Domestic Crimes,”

Registries that Recognize Safe Dates as an Evidenced-Based - Continued

- Given an “A” in the “Drug Strategy’s Anti-Violence Report Card,” in *Youth Violence*.
- Listed as a promising program in *Partnerships Against Violence: Promising Programs*.
- Described as an effective program in *A Guide for Developing Effective Middle School Programs for Sexual Assault Prevention* produced by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- Described as an effective program in *Communities that Care: Prevention Strategies Guide*, written by Hawkins and Catalano and published by Channing Bete.
- Defined as an “Exemplary” program in the *Model Program Guide* produced by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

Registries that Recognize Safe Dates as an Evidenced-Based Program- Continued

- **Listed in U.S. Department of Education Sourcebook of Drug and Violence Prevention Programs for Children & Adolescents Applying Effective Strategies to Prevent or Reduce Substance Use & Violence Among Students in Grades K-12**
- **U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Youth Violence: *Lessons Learned from the Experts***
- **American College of Obstetrics & Gynecology
Drawing the Line: *A Guide for Developing Effective Middle School Programs for Sexual Assault Prevention***

Where is Safe Dates Being Used

- **Safe Dates is being used in**
 - all 50 states**
 - nine Canadian provinces**
 - and seven countries other than the United States and Canada**
- **The program has been delivered to at least 140,000 adolescents nationwide (as of July 2007).**

Other Initiatives Involving Safe Dates

New Jersey Health Initiative (RWJ) awarded three-year grants to 8 communities involving 12 counties, at least 42 schools and 25,000 students to implement *Safe Dates*.

The RWJ Foundation awarded five-year grants to 10 communities nationwide in November 2008 (\$18 million dollars) to implement programs for the primary prevention of adolescent dating violence and *Safe Dates* is one of two required curricula.

Center for Disease Control/Research Triangle International Institute are conducting a study on the economic effectiveness of *Safe Dates* as a dating violence prevention program, and examining factors such as teacher training as a variable affecting outcomes. 54 schools are involved.