



MEDIA RELEASE

Criminal Justice Services

Ohio Criminal Justice Services • Karhlton F. Moore, Executive Director
www.ocjs.ohio.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 9, 2012

Contact: Kristen Castle, Public Information Officer, 614-728-4623

Department Recognizes Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month *Center offers guidance and resources to leaders, parents, teens and community*

(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, parents and community at large regarding teen dating violence," said OCJS Executive Director Karhlton Moore. "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 has developed a Web site to assist parents and teens in recognizing the signs of dating violence. For resources and teen dating violence information, please visit: http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/TDVMonth/TDVMonth_Home.htm.

###