



## ***Abusive Relationships: Seeing the Signs***

will be presented to the students of  
Cherokee High School

**February 7th**

### **Program Summary**

Research confirms that as many as one in five adolescent females and one in ten adolescent males have been abused physically or sexually by a dating partner. This places them at a higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior and further domestic violence. Violence is a learned behavior, but with work, can be un-learned. It typically follows a continuum, accelerating from emotional/verbal abuse in the form of continuous manipulation, humiliation, control, jealousy, obsessive texting, and stalking, to physical and/or sexual violence. This program's goal is to alert teens to the signs of dating violence and encourage them to make a conscious decision about the type of relationship they desire.

### **Movie description**

Through the eyes of an abused teen, this movie reflects the signs of escalating dating violence including verbal and physical abuse, and sexual assault.

Scripted presentation and movie are 45-60 minutes total.

### **What to expect?**

Through age-appropriate stories students learn to recognize. The safety rule encourages assertive responses, whether it is used with strangers or someone the student knows and loves. The presentation format is classroom or assembly-based so that students are in a familiar environment and able to focus and interact freely. Each presentation lasts approximately 45-60 minutes and includes interactive conversation with a movie. Teachers or school counselors are required to remain in presentation.

Program is presented by:



Serving Blanco, Burnet, Lampasas, Llano, and San Saba Counties

Erica Melton, Education and Outreach Coordinator [www.hccac.org](http://www.hccac.org) - 512-756-2607

## **Commonly asked Questions:**

### **Q: Why should we talk about child abuse?**

**A:** Child abuse does not discriminate. It happens to both boys and girls of every race, ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic class. One in four girls and one in six boys experience some form of sexual abuse by their 18th birthday. They are typically abused by someone that they know and trust. Perpetrators can be male or female, and also can be of any race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic class or education level. Due to the prevalence of child abuse, it is essential that families, schools, and communities talk about personal safety and equip children with the tools to recognize, react to and report abuse. In some states, laws require that child sexual abuse awareness education be provided in all public schools.

### **Q: What is the format of the Play it Safe!<sup>®</sup> program?**

**A:** The program should be presented to each classroom or group independently. Children are in their own setting with other children that they know which allows them to interact more openly. The program lasts approximately one hour. The presenter will speak with the children for about 40-60 minutes, and the children will view an age-appropriate, 10-20 minute video.

### **Q: Is this sex education?**

**A:** No. This is a personal safety curriculum. It is specifically designed to teach children how to be safe from abuse. Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. When referring to sexual abuse we use the term private parts to refer to the parts of the body covered by a bathing suit.

### **Q: If my child has been abused, should they still be allowed to see the program?**

**A:** Children of abuse often feel "different" from other children. Consider, by keeping your child out of the program, you are simply reinforcing that myth. Prevention programs often can be therapeutic for children. The child is reminded that the abuse was not their fault and that they are not alone in this struggle.

### **Q: Will this make my child afraid of all touch?**

**A:** There are three types of touch emphasized in Play it Safe!<sup>®</sup>. It is stressed with children that there may be times when an adult must look at their private parts, such as during a medical doctor's exam, or help with bathing or diapering. In these cases, there is a reason and the touching is not a secret.

### **Q: Should I follow this program up with training at home?**

**A:** Great idea! Child abuse prevention is not accomplished in one hour. It is important that you continue these discussions with your child. Let your child know that you are willing to discuss these sensitive topics whenever they show an interest.

### **Q: Will this program scare my child?**

**A:** The Play it Safe!<sup>®</sup> curriculum avoids using scare tactics with children, and the program's message is empowering and hopeful. Personal safety should be taught to children in a way similar to fire or drug safety. Children need to know what risks exist for them, but they also need to know that they are capable of handling these situations should they arise.

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