



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, the youth of New York are this State's most precious resource and ensuring their safety, well-being, healthy development and positive growth is a priority and responsibility we all share, and the transitional adolescent years present new challenges and choices for teens as they experience dating relationships for the first time and, unfortunately, associated pressures and expectations that can lead to abusive behavior; and

Whereas, the crime of teen dating violence, including physical, verbal and emotional abuse, sexual assault, and harassment via texting, email or "instant messaging" is a reality for many teenagers in New York and other states and, like drug abuse, it's a reality of which many parents are unaware; and

Whereas, nationwide surveys conducted in 2006 and 2007 examined teen dating relationships and experiences, and specific findings from these surveys include the following: 30% of teens in a dating relationship have been text-messaged 10-30 times an hour by a partner to find out where they are, what they are doing or who they are with; the findings also indicate that nearly one in five teens has been slapped, hit or pushed by his or her partner; and

Whereas, dating violence is occurring at increasingly younger ages as evidenced by more young victims utilizing domestic violence programs and by studies indicating that half of youth 11 to 14 years of age ("tweens") are in a dating relationship and, of those, 62% experienced verbal abuse and one in five experienced physical abuse; and

Whereas, studies also indicate that long-term effects of violent relationships can be serious and put victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide and adult re-victimization; and

Whereas, New York has long recognized the significance of addressing teen dating violence and has undertaken significant action in this area, such as the 2008 historic passage of a law that enables teens to obtain civil orders of protection against their abusers, the development of public awareness campaigns and, most recently, the production of a web banner and poster to be distributed to schools and other places frequented by teens throughout the State; and

Whereas, both Houses of Congress have declared the first week of February as "National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week," and New York State joins in this observance by encouraging statewide youth, families, schools, law enforcement communities, government agencies, elected officials, civic organizations and other interested groups to sponsor and participate in related programs and activities;

Now, Therefore, I, David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim February 2-6, 2009 as

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WEEK

in the Empire State.



Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at the Capitol in the City of Albany this twentieth day of January in the year two thousand nine.

David A. Paterson

Governor

W. J. Cunningham, Jr.
Secretary to the Governor