

# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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## **Butler County Health Services Offering Community Centered Education on Teen Dating Violence**

Educational Programs Will Center Around Sparking Difficult Conversations Between Parents and Teens

BUTLER COUNTY, Ohio- The Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Service Board, in recognition of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, will be offering evening workshops throughout February at local highschools for both parents and teenagers to educate the community on the dangers and warning signs of violence in teen relationships.

Between the ages of 13-18 many teenagers begin to seek out romantic relationships. Majority of these teenagers have never been in a romantic relationship before and do not know how to navigate these new dynamics. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 8% of U.S. high school students reported that physical violence took place within their romantic relationships and 7% said they were victims of sexual abuse involving a partner they were dating.

Victims of dating violence are unproportionally teenage women resulting in female high school students being more than twice as likely to experience sexual violence than males, specifically women of color, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Dating violence can appear in many different ways including physical and sexual violence, emotional, mental, stalking, coercion, blackmail, etc. and comes with drastic side effects.

According to child psychologist Dr. Raj Martin, “Anything that occurs when youth are psychologically developing has the potential to cause drastic, permanent side effects. When paired with fundamental interpersonal relationships, such as romantic ones, the effects can be

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even more jarring. That is why I am so passionate about preventing and educating others on teen dating violence. Everyone deserves happy and healthy love.”

The Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Service Board recognizes these statistics can be startling to parents and conversations about such topics may be difficult to navigate with teenagers. Due to this beginning Feb. 1 BCMHARSB will begin offering free educational presentations for parents and teenagers at local highschools to inform the community about violence in teenage relationships.

These presentations will be facilitated by behavioral health doctor Dr. Karen Martin, child psychologist Dr. Raj Martin and a survivor of teen dating violence, Rue Merritt. Presentations include information on teen dating violence, statistics, prevention tactics, warning signs of abuse and will be aimed to spark conversations about these difficult topics between parents with their teenagers.

In regards to the event Dr. Karen Martin said, “Conversations about any type of abuse are difficult to have with anyone, especially between teenagers and their parents. That is why events like these are so beneficial to both parents and teenagers, and why we urge members of the community to attend.”

In addition to these presentations, BCMHARSB offers counseling and recovery services for teen survivors of dating violence. BCMHARSB also offers mental health and addiction services to residents of all ages throughout Butler County.

BCMHARSB supports the youth of Butler County and wants all residents of Butler county to have fulfilling, happy and healthy relationships at any age. Visit <https://www.bcmhars.org> for more additional information regarding these presentations and specific services provided.

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#### **More About Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board:**

The Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board partners with the community of Butler County to provide a comprehensive, recovery-based treatment style of prevention and care. In addition the board provides extensive treatment options for mental health and addiction services. Through the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board Butler County residents can expect treatment that is preventive, impactful and measurable.

