

**Teen Dating Violence Prevention Education: A Policy Brief**  
**School-based policy analysis on the impact of dating violence prevention programming**

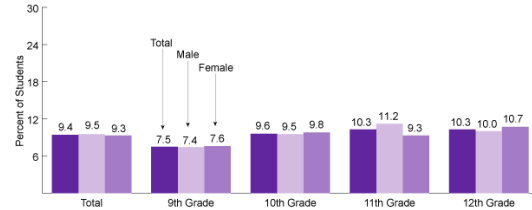
**Brief**

Dating violence is preventable. Collaborative approaches that address youth violence prevention efforts including the physical, verbal, emotional, sexual and financial abuse, warning signs and availability of resources for those suffering from abuse are needed in all schools. Efforts to impact school-based educational teen dating violence programs, especially among 9<sup>th</sup> graders who are influenced by older peer is important since the largest jump in teen dating violence occurs after 9<sup>th</sup> grade (CDC, 2012). One prevention program using live plays & small-group dialogues focused on abuse prevention by peer educators are discussed with the target audience ages 11-17 years.

**House Bill 19 Tina Croucher Act Mandates**

- Education: all public schools must include dating violence into health education curriculums for grades 7-12
- Policy: ten policy requirements must be incorporated into the Anti-Harassment policy of school handbooks

High School Students Experiencing Dating Violence\* in the Past 12 Months, by Grade Level and Sex, 2011



\*Dating violence was defined as having been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend.  
 Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Youth Online: High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Retrieved from: <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline>. Accessed: June 20, 2012.

The State Legislation and Department of Education enact mandates on school districts that are charged with the regulation and enforcement of policy requirements through a top-down approach. Schools need a continuum of services to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors and use youth as positive role models for their peers (Ohio Department of Education, 2006). The Tina Croucher Act was designed to:

- Increase instruction in dating violence prevention
- Focus on recognition of abuse warning signs
- Develop skills to talk through issues and reporting abuse

Tina’s Law was the first acknowledgement of the importance of incorporating dating violence prevention education into the health education curriculum of schools.

The primary outcomes from the analysis included:

- How school districts address the policy mandate;
- Degree of policy compliance;
- Policy recommendations

**Figure 1. Matrix of School Policy Compliance with the Tina Croucher Act**

House Bill 19 Requirements	School Districts & Private Schools									Protocols	
	A	B	C*	D	E	F	G*	H	I	Met	Not Met
State what is prohibited	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9	0
Definition of terms	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	6	3
Reporting procedures	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	1
Assigned school designee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9	0
Parent notification	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	1
Documentation	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	1
Responding and investigating	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	1
Retaliation protection strategies	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	1
Disciplinary procedure	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8	1
District semiannually report	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	6	3
<b>Protocols Met</b>	8	10	2	10	10	10	9	9	10		
<b>Protocols Not Met</b>	2	0	8	0	0	0	1	1	0		
<b>Grade</b>	B	A	F	A	A	A	A-	A-	A		
<b>Median Family Income</b>											
Less than 60K			■	✓	✓		■				
60-75K		✓	■					✓			
75-90K	✓		■								
Over 90K			■			✓	■		✓		

## Teen Dating Violence Prevention Education: A Policy Brief

### *School-based policy analysis on the impact of dating violence prevention programming*

In review of the sample population it was found that:

- 6 of 7 public schools subscribed to one School Board Policy Servicer
- School Board Policy Servicers provided highest compliance with the act
- Districts have enacted multiple policies related to Anti-Harassment and aggressive behavior policies to better serve their student population as a result of advocate efforts surrounding teen dating violence
- Private schools reflect a lack of cohesiveness in Anti-Harassment policies
- A gap in knowledge regarding dating violence perceptions across school environments

#### **Stakeholders**

Data from surveys and in-person interviews confirmed that verbal and emotional abuse were the most commonly identified types of abuse in dating relationships.

- School-wide initiatives were implemented based on the following:
  - School-level interests of administrators and perceived needs;
  - Student engagement;
  - Available funding

#### **Key Conclusions**

- Mandated policy requirements are effective in changing written policy
- 85 percent of the public schools used a school board policy servicer
- Organizations should provide prevention resources/staff training in basic abuse counseling
- Partnerships that can impact school culture around dating violence prevention need to be developed and implemented annually

#### **Recommendations**

The policy recommendations include:

- Compliancy checks on House Bill 19
- Providing funding and grants to aid the growth of dating violence prevention education
- Develop a shared language regarding policy enforcement among schools
- Alleviate the inconsistency in policy and implementation suggestions include the collection of more data on programming and outcomes of state initiatives to measure the structure, process and consequences
- Conduct an evaluation of the impact of HB19

*The continued implementation and enforcement of house bill 19 will significantly impacting the next generation of prevention efforts to combat abuse before it starts.*

Gardner, K. (2015). School-based policy analysis on the impact of dating violence prevention programming. Unpublished Results conducted at Case Western Reserve University 10900 Euclid Ave Cleveland, OH 44106. Contact Katarina Gardner at kkg13@case.edu or Mendel Singer, PhD MPH for additional information at mendel@case.edu