

# Healthy Relationships Toolkit

Empowering Teens to Build Safe & Supportive Relationships

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS TOOLKIT INTERACTIVE GUIDE TO INFORMING POLICY: AT-A-GLANCE

The **Interactive Guide to Informing Policy** provides a framework for understanding and informing policies related to violence in adolescence. This guide is one component of the Healthy Relationships Toolkit (HeaRT)\* comprehensive prevention model. The guide provides an overview of violence in adolescence prevention policy approaches, important considerations for informing policy, guidance for developing a policy plan, and tools and resources to support policy development. This guide is focused on teen dating violence but the process for informing policy applies to other forms of violence in adolescence as well.

Community efforts to prevent violence in adolescence should ensure that the best available data, evidence, and practices inform policy development, program implementation, and evaluation.

## HOW DO COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM USING THE GUIDE TO INFORMING POLICY?

To understand and inform local policy, it is important to first document existing state and local public health and organizational policies related to teen dating violence. This policy guide<sup>1</sup> is designed to:

- Highlight important considerations to keep in mind when informing policy,
- Describe ways to translate teen dating violence-related policies into practice, and
- Provide worksheets, tools, and resources related to policy efforts, reaching consensus, evaluation, and partnership building.

<sup>1</sup> The HeaRT Interactive Guide to Informing Policy is provided for informational purposes only. Note that certain restrictions apply to the use of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funds for impermissible lobbying. For more information concerning such restrictions see the CDC Anti-Lobbying Guidelines.



**Healthy Relationships Toolkit: Empowering Teens to Build Safe & Supportive Relationships** is a comprehensive model to prevent violence in adolescence. HeaRT focuses on 11- to 14-year-olds and is based on the best available evidence on what works to prevent violence in adolescence. It includes multiple components that target individuals, peers, families, schools, and neighborhoods. These components work together to promote respectful, nonviolent teen relationships.

In addition to the Guide to Informing Policy, the HeaRT model also includes:

- General Capacity Assessment for Violence Prevention Tool
- Parent Programs
- Youth Programs
- Training for Educators
- i2i Youth Communications Program
- Guide to Using Indicator Data



\*The Healthy Relationships Toolkit was previously referred to as Dating Matters.

## HOW IS THE GUIDE IMPLEMENTED?

### Staffing and Time Required

Developing policy plans can be an intensive process. The interactive guide provides tools and resources to begin that process, but the staffing and time needed to complete the process will vary based on the community's needs and ability to do the work. Work to assess and inform policy efforts to prevent teen dating violence should be led by one or more staff members at the local health department or other community organization overseeing HeaRT.

### Access

The HeaRT Interactive Guide to Informing Policy is available online at:

<https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/heart-policy>

The resources and tools in the interactive guide offer support for an organization's work but do not provide recommendations about specific policies for communities or sample language for writing policies.

### Cost

CDC provides this guide to communities at no cost. Communities should budget for staff time to carry out related activities.



## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS TOOLKIT!

The Healthy Relationships Toolkit—with all of the materials, guidance, and tools you need to implement HeaRT—is available on CDC's VetoViolence website at <https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/heart>. The Toolkit is your one-stop-shop for everything HeaRT.