

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Planning Meeting for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week**

Domestic violence doesn't necessarily start in adulthood. The seeds of victimization and violence start early. The Department of Justice consistently finds that girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence - almost three times the average for women as a whole. More than half of teens (57%) know friends or peers who have been physically, sexually, or verbally abused (Liz Claiborne, 2005). A study on domestic violence among teens found that as many as one third of high school and college students will experience violence in a relationship during their dating years (Liz Claiborne, 2005). Nationally, nearly a quarter of teen girls between 16 and 19 who are victims of homicide are murdered by a current or previous boyfriend (US DOJ, 2001).

The emotional and physical pain of domestic and dating violence in the early years of life can begin a ripple effect of individual and social problems that can last a lifetime - even span generations. Young people must be educated and empowered to end the violence in their lives.

**Planning Meeting for Teen Dating Violence Week**

Please join us for a brown bag lunch to brainstorm and plan activities for February 2007 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week. If you have ideas and suggestions but cannot make this meeting, please contact us.

DATE: December 14, 2006

TIME: Noon - 1 PM

LOCATION: 137 Kings Way, Hampton

Please RSVP if you would like to attend this meeting. If you cannot attend this meeting but would still like to be involved in activities and community education during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week, please contact us. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

### **Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week**

The U.S. Congress first declared February 6-10, 2006 as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week. Senator Crapo, together with Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton, Joe Lieberman and Lisa Murkowski introduced a resolution on November 13, 2006, calling for **February 5 - 9, 2007, to be designated "National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week."** The Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Initiative was spearheaded by teenagers across the nation who chose to take a stand and put a stop to teen dating violence. Initiated in 2004 by the American Bar Association and now supported by dozens of national, state and local organizations, the call to end teen dating violence was formally recognized in February of 2006 when both Houses of Congress declared the first week in February "National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week."

In 2006, many governors, the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services and Justice worked with the goals and activities that are part of the Initiative. The resolution called on government representatives and agencies, private organizations and public officials to promote activities in their respective communities that raise awareness of the high incidence of teen dating violence that occurs among our teens every day, as well as prevention strategies. This year's draft resolution calls for the same action.