



*Emily had been dating Michael for eight months. They had talked about getting engaged. However, Michael became enraged when Emily wanted to have a “girls’ night out” with her friends. Michael thought they would be searching for other guys. He picked Emily up when she tried to leave his house and smashed her into a wall. Emily told her friend she couldn’t go out with them because her boyfriend was jealous. Emily believed Michael was jealous because he loved her so much.*

Teen dating abuse is not about love – it’s about power and control. Dating abuse is the act or threat of abuse – physical, sexual, or emotional – by one partner in a dating relationship toward the other partner. Dating violence can exist along a continuum including deprivation, coercion, stalking, kidnapping, property damage, harassment, threats, sexual assault, physical assault, and homicide.

**You may be in an abusive relationship if your partner:**

- calls you names, insults you or continually criticizes you.
- does not trust you and acts jealous or possessive.
- tries to isolate you from family or friends.
- monitors where you go, who you call and who you spend time with.
- does not want you to work.
- controls your finances or refuses to share money.
- expects you to ask permission.

- threatens to hurt you, your family or pets.
- intentionally humiliates you.

**There are programs to prevent teen dating violence by:**

- increasing knowledge about partner violence,
- addressing attitudes that condone and permit partner violence and
- promoting awareness about early warning signs in relationships.

*CHOOSE RESPECT* is the Center for Disease Control and Prevention sponsored campaign to promote healthy relationships and prevent dating violence. For more information go to [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org) or [www.chooserespect.org](http://www.chooserespect.org)

*Source: Virginia Child Protection Newsletter, National Domestic Violence Hotline, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

*Virginia Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention*