

# Promoting Healthy Teen Relationships



How can we increase knowledge and promote healthy attitudes and behaviors regarding relationships with middle school teens?

## Challenge

Teens in Cass and Clay counties are experiencing violence within their relationships. Nearly 8% of students report being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they didn't want to and nearly 9% said they had been physically hurt on purpose by someone they were dating. Local data also suggests that students are increasingly experiencing violence through technology within their relationships with nearly 18% of students reporting they were bullied through technology.

## Solution

Present a comprehensive relationships curriculum, Teen Talk, which introduces students to concepts of healthy and unhealthy relationships, dating violence, the role and impact of technology in relationships, and the influence of media in their perceptions of what positive relationships look like. Offer tools and tips regarding how to create healthy relationships and information about how to help someone who may be experiencing violence in their own relationship.

## Contact Information

Rape and Abuse Crisis Center of Fargo-Moorhead  
P.O. Box 2984  
Fargo, ND 58108-2984

Dayna Olson  
[dayna@raccfm.com](mailto:dayna@raccfm.com)

Greg Lemke  
[gregl@raccfm.com](mailto:gregl@raccfm.com)

Kathy Smith  
[kathy@raccfm.com](mailto:kathy@raccfm.com)

## Results

In 2014, the healthy relationships curriculum, Teen Talk, was presented to nearly 395 students in Clay county. Evidence from pre and post evaluations suggests that students are increasing their knowledge, desired attitudes and desired behaviors in the following ways:

- Students are better able to identify characteristics of a healthy relationship
- Students are better able to identify characteristics of an unhealthy relationship
- Students were better able to identify less desired behaviors such as calling boys names

As a result of the findings within the evaluations, we have made several modifications to the program and are planning to enhance sessions to further increase impact on healthy behaviors and improve healthy relationship skills. We are also planning to talk with schools about community-level strategies that could be implemented within the larger school system.