

---

## **Review of the CDC's "Choose Respect" Dating Violence Prevention Materials**

**Jodie Hertzog**

Department of Sociology  
Wichita State University

[Jodie.hertzog@wichita.edu](mailto:Jodie.hertzog@wichita.edu)



## **Review of the CDC's "Choose Respect" Dating Violence Prevention Materials**

Jodie Hertzog  
Wichita State University

**Abstract:** An overview of resources developed for the Center for Disease Control's national "Choose Respect" initiative targeting youth ages 11-14 is provided. The initiative's goal is to prevent teen dating violence by promoting healthy relationship development. Resources include a community action kit, downloadable video, television and radio advertisements as well as educational posters.

### **Introduction**

Based on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey's findings that violence in dating relationships is a social issue facing American youth, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention launched a national initiative, Choose Respect, during the summer of 2006 (Center for Disease Control & Prevention, 2006). The program, targeting youth ages 11 – 14, aims to prevent teen dating violence by promoting healthy, respectful relationships. To aid youth development specialists in the task of addressing dating violence, the CDC has made a variety of resources available including a community action kit; and an informational website (<http://www.chooserespect.org/scripts/index.asp>).

### **Resource Review**

The 60 page community action kit, available free of charge on the website, provides an overview of the campaign along with program content related to identifying risk factors for and consequences of abusive dating relationships. The kit also provides suggestions for involving parents, schools, youth, and communities in the process of promoting healthy relationships. For instance, the section on partnering with schools provides 14 suggestions for infusing dating violence prevention into school curriculums. Finally, the action kit provides a list of suggested books and videos that can be used in youth programming.

The Choose Respect website includes a number of supporting materials including a downloadable 13 minute video entitled, "Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse and

Violence” (with discussion guide), television and radio advertisements (in both English and Spanish), and educational posters and pocket guides. The “teen” section provides statistics along with information such as a bill of rights and responsibilities in romantic relationships and a list of safety tips. The main interactive feature is the Choose Respect game which allows teens to create an on-line music video.

## Discussion

The Choose Respect materials are a useful first step in developing dating violence prevention initiatives. The ecological focus (involving parents, schools, communities, and youth) is a definite strength of the action kit. The community action kit and website, however, do not provide a ready-to-use packaged curriculum. Nonetheless, the materials can be easily adapted into programming targeting either youth or parents.

## References

Center for Disease Control & Prevention. (2006). Notice to Readers: Choose Respect National Initiative. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, 55(19): 535. Available on-line at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5519a4.htm>

Center for Disease Control & Prevention. (2006). Choose Respect Community Action Kit: Helping Preteens and Teens Build Healthy Relationships. Available on-line at <http://www.chooserespect.org/scripts/materials/actionkit/actionkit.asp>

Center for Disease Control & Prevention. (2006). Choose Respect Website. Available at: <http://www.chooserespect.org/scripts/index.asp>

---

© Copyright of Journal of Youth Development ~ Bridging Research and Practice. Content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without copyright holder’s express written permission. Contact Editor at: [patricia.dawson@oregonstate.edu](mailto:patricia.dawson@oregonstate.edu) for details. However, users may print, download or email articles for individual use.

ISSN 2325-4009 (Print); ISSN 2325-4017 (Online)