

Relationship Abuse & Sexual Violence Response Protocol Training

Supporting students affected by sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence



Training Purpose

The Blaine School District knows that **domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual violence** affect students, staff, and communities.

You might see these problems at school or in your personal life. **We want you to feel prepared.**

Relationship Abuse & Sexual Violence Response Protocol

For students impacted by sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence, or dating violence

Local Support Resources

Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS) of Whatcom County

www.dvsas.org

24-hour helpline: 1-877-715-1563
or (360) 715-1563

Lummi Victims of Crime (LVOC)

24-hour helpline: (360) 312-2015

The Northwest Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian, and Gay Survivors of Abuse

www.nwnetwork.org

(206) 568-7777

Learning Objectives

- Find related **district policies**
- Define relationship abuse and sexual violence
- Spot **signs of sexual or dating violence in the life of a student**
- Follow the protocol and **respond to students in a helpful way**
- Get in touch with local **community resources**

Creating Safe Learning Environments

It is the policy of our district to create a safe and caring place for students to learn.

Sexual Harassment Against Students Prohibited
(Policy 3205 and 3205P)

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Against Students Prohibited
(Policy 3207 and 3207P)

Creating Safe Learning Environments

This School District strives to create a culture of care where all individuals **feel safe, valued, and respected**. Violence of any kind is a violation of human rights and an obstacle to learning. Sexual violence, sexual harassment, and dating violence are specific types of violence that are addressed under our policies because **they limit potential, thrive in silence**, and exist for many reasons.

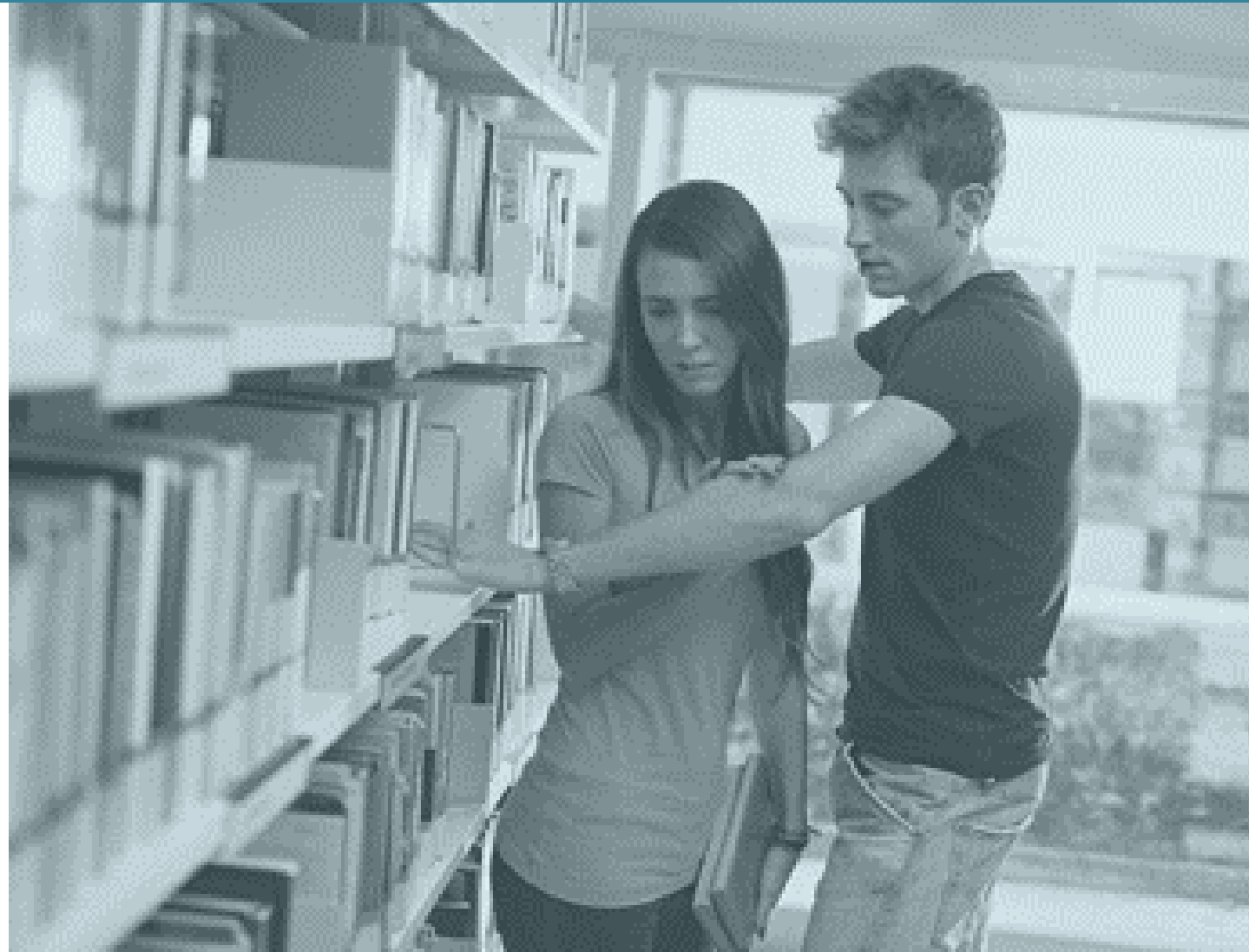


Creating Safe Learning Environments

Creating a safe setting for learning starts with YOU – the helpful tools you'll learn today can make a difference in the lives of students, family members, coworkers, or anyone else you care about.

What is Relationship Abuse?

A **pattern** of behaviors used to gain **power and control over** another person, usually **a romantic partner**.



What is Consent?

Consent is an expression of expectations and a respect for boundaries. It is a conversation that **requires sharing power.**

Some young people between the ages of 12 and 16 **cannot legally consent** to sexual contact, depending on the age or role of the other person.

Consent can **never be freely given by certain people**, like anyone under the age of 12 and vulnerable youth or adults with certain mental or physical disabilities.

What is Sexual *VIOLENCE*?

Sexual *violence* is **any type of sexual contact without consent.**

At school, sexual violence and sexual harassment mean any type of sexual gesture, communication, or physical contact **that makes others feel threatened or intimidated.**

Sexual violence includes behaviors from sexual harassment to sexual assault or rape.

What is Sexual **ASSAULT**?

Sexual **assault** happens when a person is **forced into sexual acts without their clear consent.**

This includes all kinds of sexual behavior where someone is **forced, tricked, pressured, or feels violated.**

CONSENT



Freely Given

Reversible

Informed

Enthusiastic

Specific

Who is Affected?

Domestic and sexual violence **can happen to anyone**, including:

- Elders and teens
- Women, men, and people who are non-binary
- People who identify as LGBTQ+
- People with disabilities

Children can experience trauma living in a home with domestic violence.

Children can be sexually abused or assaulted.

How to Identify Sexual & Domestic Violence

Most people don't talk about relationship abuse and sexual violence. When we do hear about it, we might get wrong information about why it happened and who is at fault.

Your response can either *repeat harmful messages or challenge them.*

These behaviors could indicate a problem in the life of a student:

- **Suspiciousness** or accusations of cheating
- **Physically inflicting pain** or hurt in any way
- **Isolation** from family and friends
- **Constant mood swings**
- **Telling a partner** what they can and cannot do

These behaviors could indicate a problem in the life of a student:

- **Ignoring privacy** and boundaries, like checking the other person's cell phone, email, or social networks
- **Extreme jealousy**, possessiveness, or insecurity
- **Belittling**, name-calling, or put-downs
- **Explosive** temper
- **Coercing** or pressuring someone to have sex

If you are concerned about a student:

1. Approach the student **privately**
2. Explore that concern, with the goal of offering support, **not to do an investigation**
3. **DO NO HARM**

If you are concerned the student may
be a victim:

you can say...

I care about you and have been worried about you lately. How would you feel about walking to the **counselor's office** together so you can get some support?

If you are concerned the student may know a victim:

you can say...

I thought I heard you say something about sexual contact that did not sound consensual. Alcohol and consent can be tricky. **I am worried about that person's safety** and would like to help.

Trauma & Healing

Healing from trauma happens through **connection**.

How YOU respond can make a difference in a survivor's healing.

If a student tells you about a dating or sexual violence incident:

1. **Believe, support, & validate**
2. **Tell the student** the plan: that you are going to contact the school counselor
3. Determine if a law enforcement or CPS **report** is required: **tell the student** if you will be making a report
4. Contact the **school counselor**

Mandated Reporters Should:

1. Tell the student that you are required to make a report to law enforcement or CPS, and invite the student to participate in report.

2. Do not investigate the report.

3. Inform your administrator.

4. Report to CPS or law enforcement.

5. Offer to have a DVSAS or Lummi Victims of Crime (LVOC) advocate meet with the victim **during the police or CPS interview.**

6. Call DVSAS or LVOC to inform them of time/location of the interview.

7. Take down contact information of the people responding and ask about the best way to **follow up.**

How to Talk to a Student About an Incident

Believe
Support
Validate



How to Talk to a Student About an Incident

- I'm **sorry to hear this** has happened to you.
- This was **not your fault**.
- You deserve to be treated with **respect**.
- What do **you** need?

How to Talk to a Student About an Incident

- I **believe** you.
- I'm **so glad** you came to talk to me.
- This is **important**.
- I know this must be uncomfortable. Please **take your time** .
- This sounds like a **difficult experience**.

DO

Talk to the student in a safe setting, **away from other students**

Recognize that the student may be fearful, confused, and/or vulnerable

Believe them: It takes a lot of courage to tell an adult and it can be devastating to hear that someone doesn't believe you

Ask them what they think will **make them feel safer** and if they feel comfortable telling friends or family what is going on

DO

Support by **actively listening**

Respect their privacy:

Only tell the people who need to know about the situation

Think about the questions you ask and what you need to know –
are you asking questions for your own curiosity?

A student could feel blamed by questions related to drug or alcohol use, what the student was wearing at the time, or about their other choices.

DON'T

Minimize or downplay the situation

Give **advice**

Place **any blame** on the victim

Make promises you can't keep

DON'T

Ask if they were **drinking**

Lecture the student about what you think was poor judgment or choices

Ask what they were **wearing**

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Summary

**You are an important person in student's lives.
You can help survivors by:**

- **Believing, supporting,** and **validating** them.
- **Listening and making supportive statements.** It is not helpful to ask a lot of questions.
- Connecting them with the **school counselor.**

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