



THE
CENTER
FOR
WOMEN
AND
FAMILIES



Children's
Peace
Center
at Our Lady of Peace

Dear Community Partner,

As a community leader in youth services, you may be aware that 1 in 4 teens report being a victim of verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse within a dating relationship each year. Currently, 72% of eighth and ninth graders report that they are dating; yet by the time these young adults reach high school, 54% percent know someone who has experienced dating violence. Violence is all too common among our teens and foreshadows the possibility of continued and more severe violence in adulthood.

Most anti-violence campaigns in the past have been reactionary in their interventions, focusing mainly on helping victims become survivors of violence. And this issue has been largely accepted as a social problem that afflicts our communities. But we know that power-based personal violence, like dating violence, is so much more than a social issue. Public health officials now recognize that dating violence is a vital *health issue* among youth, so they are using the public health model as a guideline for promoting primary prevention of domestic and sexual violence. The role of primary prevention in this area is to stop violent situations from ever happening in the first place by changing the social norms teens have grown accustomed to. Good science also exists (including Bystander Intervention Theory, Social Diffusion Theory, and Marketing Research Methods) that indicates primary prevention of teen dating violence really is possible.

The Center for Women and Families and Children's Peace Center at Our Lady of Peace have been given the opportunity to begin a campaign for the primary prevention of teen dating violence right here in Metro Louisville. To make this campaign a success, we're convening a **Coalition to Prevent Teen Dating Violence** composed of community members—influencers and policy-makers—directly invested in the welfare of teens. We think your expertise would be invaluable to the success of this campaign and invite you to become a part of this effort. The goal of this coalition is to have honest conversations about teen dating violence in our community and to ask ourselves what we can do to eliminate this pervasive issue. Ultimately, you will be helping to create a groundbreaking vision for Louisville in which teen dating violence is no longer a part of the social landscape.

Prevention is *possible!* We look forward to collaborating with you.

Sincerely,
Denise Vasquez Troutman

President/CEO
The Center for Women and Families

Tim Brady

President & CEO
Our Lady of Peace