



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**COUNTY RECOGNIZES TEEN DATING ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH
AND NCJW EDUCATION PROJECT**

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. On Tuesday, Franklin County Commissioners recognized the advocacy efforts of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), Columbus Section, designed to protect youth from abuse.

NCJW launched a community-based information campaign with billboards in select locations and posters in high schools throughout the community to: promote awareness of the problem among teens, parents, educators and the general public; point out the warning signs of abuse; and provide information about how to get help.

“The statistics regarding teen dating violence reflect increasing social and personal pressures,” said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. “Approximately one of every three students will experience an abusive dating relationship by the time they graduate from high school or college. As a community we must teach teens the foundation for healthy relationships, the warning signs of abuse and how to break free from harmful relationships.”

NCJW introduced *Love Shouldn't Hurt*, a teen dating abuse prevention program for high school students, several years ago. The program, presented to area high schools, provides students with the facts about teen dating abuse with a video followed by a discussion led by trained volunteers. Students also receive a pocket-sized resource card with contact information for one-on-one assistance through the National Teen Dating Abuse 24/7 Helpline, 866-331-9474.

“Cell phones and internet technologies have created new ways for teens to be intimidated or harassed without their parents’ knowledge,” said Commissioner Paula Brooks. “Fortunately, programs like *Love Shouldn't Hurt* exist to educate our young people about the warning signs of abuse, and provide information about how to get help.”

“It is important for not only students but school professionals and parents to be educated about dating violence. Abusive relationships have lasting negative impacts on a teenager’s life

and we all must do whatever we can to break the cycle of dangerous and unhealthy relationships,” said Commissioner John O’Grady.

To date, NCJW volunteers have reached more than 5,500 teens through the program at schools throughout central Ohio. NCJW also advocated for the recent passage of legislation mandating that schools provide teen dating abuse information within the health education curricula across the state. For more information about the NCJW Teen Dating Abuse Prevention Project, contact Nancy Eisenman at 614-747-1704.

NCJW is a volunteer organization, inspired by Jewish values, that works to improve the quality of life for women, children and families and to ensure individual rights and freedoms for all through its network of 90,000 members, supporters and volunteers nationwide. For more information about the NCJW, Columbus Section, visit the website at www.ncjwcolumbus.org.