

Senate Bill 592 (As Amended 4/8/15)

Healthy Relationships and Safe Schools Act

Senator Connie M. Leyva (D-Chino)

SUMMARY

SB 592 updates school district curriculum and policies on adolescent relationship abuse to promote education on healthy relationships and prevent adolescent relationship abuse.

PROBLEM

Adolescent relationship abuse is a pervasive problem with far-reaching, negative impacts on California youth, families, schools, communities, and the economy.

BACKGROUND

Schools have a duty to provide a safe learning environment for all pupils and play a key role in supporting adolescents in forming healthy relationships and providing effective interventions when abuse occurs.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) finds that about one in five women and nearly one in seven men who have ever experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner, first experienced some form of partner violence between ages 11 and 17 and a substantial number of adolescent relationship abuse incidents occur on school campuses.

A major study by the CDC found that nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner in a single year.

According to the California Student Survey (CSS), 3% of 9th graders and 7% of 11th graders reported at least one incident of physical dating violence. Among students who had a boyfriend or girlfriend, the rates of dating violence were 5.4% in 9th grade and 11% in 11th grade.

Victims of dating violence or sexual coercion are also three times more likely to score more D's and F's in school than A's.

According to the CDC, "Teens who are victims are more likely to be depressed and do poorly in school.

They may engage in unhealthy behaviors, like using drugs and alcohol, and are more likely to have eating disorders. Some teens even think about or attempt suicide."

Violent relationships in adolescence can also greatly increase the risk for victims to experience domestic violence in adulthood.

SOLUTION

Schools play a pivotal role in preventing relationship abuse and providing support for victims.

This bill seeks to amend the Education Code to mandate schools grades 6 to 12 districts update their policies to include within their school safety plans guidance on how to prevent, detect, intervene, and respond to incidents of adolescent relationship abuse and to promote education on healthy relationships.

Specifically this bill:

Requires schools serving any of the grades 6 through 12 to include policies and procedures to prevent and respond to adolescent relationship abuse in their comprehensive school safety plan.

Requires school districts provide educational and age-appropriate curriculum to promote healthy relationships and prevent adolescent relationship abuse to students in grades 6 through 12.

Requires the State Department of Education provide information on their website about model policies, procedures, and curriculum.

SUPPORT

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (co-sponsor)

Women's Foundation of California Policy Institute (co-sponsor)

Alliance for Community Transformations
California Adolescent Health Collaborative
California School-Based Health Alliance

California Women's Law Center
Casa de Esperanza

Center for Family Solutions
Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse
Family Violence Law Center
Interface Children and Family Services
Laura's House
Marjaree Mason Center
Monarch Services
Mountain Crisis Services
National Association of Social Workers
Next Door Solutions to Community Violence
RISE
Peace Over Violence
Rainbow Services
SAVE (Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments)
Shepherd's Door
Strong Hearted Native Women's Coalition Inc.
Valley Crisis Center
Wild Iris
Youth Radio
YWCA Glendale
YWCA Santa Monica
YWCA Silicon Valley

OPPOSITION

None on file

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