

**Moonshadow Productions**  
*The Choice Is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence* ©2009  
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**Target Audience:** High School Students ages 13-18; College Students 18-25  
**Duration:** 1 or 2 Class Periods  
**Goal:** To prepare students to recognize the cycle of domestic violence and how to prevent or end their participation in a dangerous relationship

**Objectives:** By the end of this session, students will be able to:  
\*Cite the importance of breaking off a bad relationship  
\*Describe various stages of domestic violence  
\*Cite the causal relationship of violence to serious harm  
\*Suggest the qualities needed to maintain a healthy relationship

**Setting:** Classroom  
**Materials:** Television with DVD player  
Whiteboard and marker pens  
Copy of DVD titled "The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence" By Moonshadow Productions  
Copies of Discussion Questions (1 per student)  
Copies of Evaluations (1 per student)

**Lesson Overview:**

**Class Session One: 50 Minutes**

1. Teacher reads introduction to Part One to class  
3 Minutes  
Students watch DVD 38:00 Minutes
2. 10: Minutes Students complete the questions and evaluations in class

**Class Session Two: 50 Minutes**

1. Review Discussion Questions
2. Review Evaluations

**Day One: 50 Minutes**

**Welcome and Introduction: 3 Minutes:** “The purpose of “The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence” DVD is to provide information regarding the importance of ending an unhealthy relationship. As you watch this video please keep these ideas in mind: 1) An abuser will manipulate, deceive, threaten, coerce and intimidate his victim into remaining in an abusive relationship. 2) He will make the victim feel totally dependent and in some cases even threaten suicide if the victim breaks up. I want you to take out a piece of paper and write your answers to the following four questions before you watch this video. Keep your answers to yourselves. We will share at the end of this class period so that we may learn from each other.”

**Photocopy and hand out this page to students.**

**“The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence”  
Self-evaluation quiz.**

- 1. DESCRIBE ANY EXPERIENCE IN WHICH YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER HAS BEEN AGGRESSIVE TOWARDS YOU.**
  
- 2. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY EXPERIENCE YOU’VE HAD IN WHICH YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER HAS BERATED, HIT, SLAPPED, PUNCHED OR OTHERWISE ABUSED YOU.**
  
- 3. DESCRIBE ANY INSTANCES IN WHICH YOUR SIGNIFIACANT OTHER HAS BEEN OVERLY CONTROLLING.**
  
- 4. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY INSTANCES IN WHICH YOU FORGAVE VERBAL, PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE BECAUSE HE OR SHE “LOVED” YOU?**
  
- 5. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH YOU TRIED TO BREAK IT OFF WITH YOUR ABUSING PARTNER BUT WERE INTIMIDATED INTO REMAINING IN THE RELATIONSHIP.**
  
- 6. HOW DOES BEING ABUSED MAKE YOU FEEL?**
  
- 7. HOW DOES ABUSING SOMEONE ELSE MAKE YOU FEEL?**
  
- 8. WHAT ROLE DOES EITHER ALCOHOL OR DRUGS PLAY IN TEEN DATING VIOLENCE?**
  
- 9. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHERS WHO ARE IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS?**
  
- 10. WHY DO VICTIMS RETURN TO ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS?**

**“Write your answers down now or after watching the video. Let’s watch the movie.”**

**Insert Video into DVD Player and Select: “The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence”**

**Play movie: 38 Minutes:**

**Distribute the evaluation forms to Students-have students complete the forms.**

**BEFORE EVERYONE GOES HOME ON DAY ONE:**

**Day One Concluding Remarks:** “It is remarkable that each of the women we saw in prison uniforms had *herself* been a victim of domestic violence. And each victim tried, probably out of a sense of utter desperation, to fight back with violence and they, in turn, were arrested and sent to prison for domestic violence. This is a very cruel irony, and we need to remember these women were victims and no one should ever blame them for trying to regain some control over their lives. However, breaking the law isn’t a solution as we’ve all seen. Many people choose badly and they’re not to blame because they didn’t have the ability to see into the future. The lesson here is to pay attention to the warning signs and get out as soon as you can see it turning violent or even verbally abusive. Many victims simply feel stuck, and as a society, we need to empower them to get moving when they recognize the early warning signs of abuse. Victims need to understand that there is help if they reach for it. Sometimes it’s with family, church or especially in local women’s centers. The point is the sooner they engage in a decision-making process to get the help they need to escape the violence, the better chance they have of avoiding the tragic consequences that either inaction or resorting to violence brings.”

**DAY TWO: 50 minutes** Students review with teacher.

**Welcome and Introduction: 3 Minutes:** “I’m sure you recall the video we just watched yesterday, “The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence.” You will recall its purpose was to provide information regarding the importance of ending an unhealthy relationship.

Today we will review the responses you wrote to the questions we passed out and we’ll also review the evaluations.

**LET’S REVIEW OUR ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS WE PASSED OUT YESTERDAY. SHARING YOUR ANSWERS IS PURELY VOLUNTARY!!!**

**ALLOCATE 20 – 30 MINUTES**

**“The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence”  
Self-evaluation quiz.**

- 1. DESCRIBE ANY EXPERIENCE IN WHICH YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER HAS BEEN AGGRESSIVE TOWARDS YOU.**
  
- 2. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY EXPERIENCE YOU’VE HAD IN WHICH YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER HAS BERATED, HIT, SLAPPED, PUNCHED OR OTHERWISE ABUSED YOU.**
  
- 3. DESCRIBE ANY INSTANCES IN WHICH YOUR SIGNIFIACANT OTHER HAS BEEN OVERLY-CONTROLLING?**
  
- 4. HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY INSTANCES IN WHICH YOU FORGAVE VERBAL, PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE BECAUSE SOMEONE SAID HE OR SHE “LOVED” YOU?**
  
- 5. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH YOU TRIED TO BREAK IT OFF WITH YOUR ABUSING PARTNER BUT STAYED.**
  
- 6. HOW DOES BEING ABUSED MAKE SOMEONE FEEL?**
  
- 7. HOW DOES ABUSING SOMEONE ELSE MAKE YOU FEEL?**
  
- 8. WHAT ROLE DOES EITHER ALCOHOL OR DRUGS PLAY IN TEEN DATING VIOLENCE?**

**9. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHERS WHO ARE IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS?**

**10. WHY DO VICTIMS RETURN TO ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS?**

Class Review Evaluation form for students: **ALLOCATE 20 – 30 MINUTES**

**“The Choice is Yours: Breaking the Cycle of Teen Dating Violence” DVD**

Evaluation Sheets: Pass out evaluation sheets and have students complete the evaluations. Go over responses in class to stimulate conversation.

Teacher Narrative: Now let’s review the evaluations: Who wants to describe his or her response to the following questions?

After reviewing this DVD, please let us know what really worked, and what needs to be improved by answering the following questions using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being BAD and 5 being GREAT, or 1 being Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree—depending on the question. Please circle the number that best reflects your opinion.

1 2 3 4 5 Music, Graphics, Photos & Animations

1 2 3 4 5 Over all value of information provided

1 2 3 4 5 This presentation improves my understanding of the importance of ending an unhealthy relationship.

1 2 3 4 5 This presentation helped me understand that my safety is more important than staying in a relationship in which I am being abused.

1 2 3 4 5 This presentation made me understand that fighting back can lead to disastrous consequences.

1 2 3 4 5 This video helps me understand that abuse is not love and people who abuse others do not do so out of love.

1 2 3 4 5 This presentation increases my understanding that domestic violence can have leave terrible psychological scars on all members of the family and is likely perpetuate a cycle of domestic violence.

What did you like most about this video? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What CHANGES do you think this video needs to improve its message?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

After Class Review: Collect the evaluations and forward to the curriculum director.

## Optional Activities:

Research has shown that a single exposure to educational materials like this does not change student's behavior unless it is accompanied by activities that solidify and personalize the information for the individual student.

Choose from one or more of the following activities to facilitate discussion and to allow the students to process this information in a meaningful way. They include writing assignments, field trips, dramas, poster presentations and competitions, and teaching younger students.

### 1. Writing assignment

Describe one of your best friends. Tell about the personality features that make this person special to you. What would you do tell him or her about staying in a relationship in which abuse was occurring?

### 2. Role Play/ Drama

Have your class select actors who form into two groups: Abused and abuser. The 'abusers' should try asking/begging/pleading with the "abused" boyfriend or girlfriend to make up and promise it will not happen again. The "abused" should conceive of ways to say no and cite imaginary instances in which "this has happened before" and for that reason the/she doesn't trust the abuser. The point is to gain an understanding that promises are cheap and abusive relationships need to be ended.

### 3. Poster contest

Sponsor a competition among students to design an ad that raises awareness that domestic abuse harms all members of the family. Offer awards in several categories, based on classes, e.g. – 9<sup>th</sup> grade vs. 10<sup>th</sup> grade, to the most graphic, most scientific, best use of color, so that there are several winners. Display posters in the school.

### 5. Teaching younger students

Have groups of your students prepare a lesson for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders about the importance of ending a violent relationship before serious harm occurs. Be sure to include instructions about dialing 911 in case of witnessing domestic violence.