



Inspiring healthy relationships

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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JAMES S. BOWER FOUNDATION INVESTS \$70,000 in What is LOVE TO SUPPORT SANTA BARBARA YOUTH IN IDENTIFYING ABUSIVE LOVE AND BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP SKILLS.

What is LOVE will provide Santa Barbara area youth more resources to help identify abusive love and build healthy relationship skills this fall. **What is LOVE** is using a grant from the James S. Bower Foundation to expand the reach of its dating violence prevention and awareness program. One in three teens in Santa Barbara County experience dating abuse and most never ask for help.

Jon Clark, President of the James S. Bower Foundation, said, "We are pleased to be supporting **What is LOVE** and their work in the Santa Barbara School District. We know that part of what students need in order to succeed are school and social environments where they feel safe and supported. The District has made it clear that addressing dating violence is a major part in creating those environments and that **What is LOVE** has a comprehensive program to help make that happen."

This type of violence can have a profound impact on the physical and emotional growth of a youth with short- and long-term consequences. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention points out that youth who are harmed by teen dating violence are more likely to do poorly in school, to report binge drinking, attempt suicide, engage in physical fighting and have a greater likelihood of teen pregnancy. Together, they create lasting harm that affects the victim of abuse, their friends, families, schools and surrounding communities.

What is LOVE addresses this crisis utilizing a restorative justice approach, innovative outreach employing technology, the power of storytelling and a teen-driven awareness campaign. Its programs currently include a school assembly and school-based workshops for youth and parents. **What is LOVE** plans to expand its programming to include a documentary, teacher and parent tools, and a dating quiz Mobile APP.



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Christy Haynes, MA Psy., founder and director of prevention for WIL said, “Thanks to the generous support of the James S. Bower Foundation, we can continue to provide this essential programming to Santa Barbara County youth. This investment will provide an opportunity to capture more teen stories for the Assembly Format, develop Mobile APPS helping teens identify abusive love, train UCSB peer educators, expand our outreach capabilities with on-line resources, provide educational workshops to parents & teachers, and provide every school in Santa Barbara County awareness materials with resources for help.”

For more information about the program visit **What is LOVE** at www.whatisloveteens.org or join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/whatisloveteens?ref=hl>