



Inspiring healthy relationships

INNOVATIVE DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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3000 TEENS STARTED A CONVERSATION THIS MONTH, "What is healthy LOVE? How does dating abuse impact school success? How do I connect to resources?"

Santa Barbara, October 2014 -- What is LOVE provides ALL Santa Barbara High Schools an assembly to help students identify abusive love and build healthy relationship skills throughout the month of October. School principals, counselors, parents and teens have resoundingly expressed an immediate need for continued and expanded in-school dating violence prevention programs. Dr. Cash, Santa Barbara Unified School District Superintendent, lead an effort to secure a contract with [What is LOVE](#) 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.

3000 teens began a dialogue about how to identify healthy love and how to connect to resources if they are experiencing abusive love. [What is Love](#), founder Christy Haynes MA Psy., said, "I will be creating a safe space to talk about this personal private topic utilizing a restorative justice approach. This approach allows for someone experiencing or participating in dating abuse to ask for help".

"Our teens are confused about LOVE. With the recent NFL scandals or the Oscar Pistorius verdict, this is a great opportunity to begin this conversation, and thanks to investments from the Fund for Santa Barbara, Verizon Foundation, and the James S. Bower Foundation, we are well on our way".

This type of violence can have a profound impact on the physical, emotional and academic 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 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.

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>