

Love Shouldn't Hurt

Healthy Relationships Workshops

5th grade - college

Shalom Bayit recognizes that dating violence happens in teen relationships just as often as it does in adult relationships. In fact, twenty-eight percent of high school students have experienced abuse in a relationship. With this in mind, a college-age intern created a youth-led healthy relationships educational program for Jewish teens entitled Love Shouldn't Hurt. Since its inception in 2002, Love Shouldn't Hurt has given over 70 presentations, reaching more than 1,300 Jewish youth throughout the Bay Area.

Our goal is to promote shalom bayit (peace in the home) by providing today's Jewish youth with the knowledge and tools they need in order to recognize abusive behavior and make healthy relationship choices in the future. We base our teen curriculum on an interactive peer model, which encourages teens to examine their standards for future relationships. The curriculum provides young people an opportunity to explore their personal boundaries, discuss unhealthy relationships, brainstorm healthy alternatives, and learn to recognize warning signs of abuse. Our Middle School workshop talks about the abuse that happens between friends and peers so that students begin to understand the continuum of abusive behavior. Our presentation also gives the students a variety of resources should they or their friends encounter abuse in their lives. By approaching this issue from a Jewish perspective, we can encourage young people to think about what Judaism has to say about relationships, communication and respect. We believe that educating teens now about dating violence is key to breaking the cycle of violence in our communities.

Our one-hour teen workshop includes:

- An introduction of Shalom Bayit services
- Jewish values on relationships and abuse
- Definitions of abuse; abuse as power and control over someone else
- Five forms of abuse: physical, verbal, sexual, economic and emotional abuse
- Interactive role-plays that address these issues of power and control in every day peer and dating interactions. Scenarios were developed with input from past workshop attendees
- Healthy relationships brainstorm: What makes relationships work? Students brainstorm qualities they feel make up a healthy friend or dating relationship
- Stereotypes exercise: How is domestic violence viewed in the Jewish community? How do stereotypes of Jewish women and men reinforce our ideas about abuse in Jewish families?
- Bottom lines: discussion that emphasizes everyone's right to be treated equally in our relationships and helps students to identify their own "bottom lines" of what they do or do not want in relationships with friends and dating partners
- Resources: where to turn if a student or their friend is being abused

There is ample time for the participants to ask questions, discuss concerns, or anonymously address specific situations.

Love Shouldn't Hurt also offers parent education workshops and staff trainings for teachers, counselors, CITs, and other Jewish educators. We provide information on identifying abuse, how to talk to teens about relationships, and problem solving when someone is at risk.

There is no charge for the workshops, but we ask for a sliding scale donation of \$250 - \$100 to cover our costs if your organization is able to do so.

For more information or to schedule a workshop, call Love Shouldn't Hurt at (510) 451-8874.