

AVA (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse)

Partnering Ministries

Blowing the lid off

TDV (Teen Dating Violence)

Midwest Conference Women Ministries would like to extend an invitation to youth ministries in Covenant churches to partner with them in addressing Teen Dating Violence. AVA (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse) began addressing domestic violence and teen dating violence in conference churches three years ago. Now they are asking Midwest Conference churches to partner with them in this vital ministry through prayer support and assisting with the financial aspects of providing information, materials and support to those in youth ministry.

Teen dating violence (TDV) is so prevalent that The National Center for Disease Control (CDC) recently cited teen dating violence as a **national epidemic**. Dating violence affects a huge number of teens cutting across every race, class, educational background, income and religion. So yes, that means it's in our Covenant churches!

Did you know that any teen can be at risk for dating violence? It's a myth that it only happens to those with low self-esteem. Even teens with a high self-esteem are often targeted by abusers using mind control to tear down their sense of identity. Girls tend to believe that they can save these guys because "he's a good guy." We typically don't find out about it because most of our teens never tell an adult. And some teens believe that violence and threats of violence are acceptable relational skills.

In a recent conversation with Superintendent Ken Carlson in regards to the large number of conference churches who assume that teen dating violence is a "women's" issue and not a "men's" issue, Ken said, "We need to find a way to blow the lid off this topic." On that note, that is exactly what Women Ministries is doing. Partnering with them by giving prayer and financial support to Midwest Conference Women Ministries Board - designated for AVA - will help "blow the lid off." Partnership contributions are to be sent to WM Treasurer, 2915 220 St, Stanton IA 51573, with the designation for AVA. Please, prayerfully consider how you can partner with Midwest Conference Women Ministries.

In return, Women Ministries of the Midwest Conference want to give back to our Covenant churches. Please check your calendar and contact **Kyle Kelly, AVA Regional Coordinator**, so that Women Ministries can come alongside Midwest Conference churches in addressing these critical issues. Kyle has received training in the field of Teen Dating Violence and Domestic Violence. She earned a degree in addictions counseling and has received extensive training from AVA with the Evangelical Covenant Church, and from leading agencies in the field such as Faith Trust Institute, Interchurch Ministries, Violence Against Women and an crisis center.

Kyle and the Midwest Conference Women Ministries Board is praying for Midwest Conference churches and for the opportunity to come to youth groups or events to lead a workshop on the critical topic of teen dating violence, with the goal being that all our teens will learn to value non-violent relationships; and that they can be the ones to break the cycle of violence and be incredibly effective peer leaders. Kyle is also available to share with any adult group on the topic of teen dating violence and domestic violence.

Contact Kyle Kelly at:

402-625-2491 or kylekelly@alltel.net