

# Dating Violence and the Developing Adolescent Brain [Advocate Seminar]

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## Summary

An educational seminar for advocates, teachers, social workers, church leaders and interested community members on the basics of adolescent brain development and the dynamics of teen dating violence. Participants will receive information that will help them understand and relate to developing adolescents. Topics include: early brain development; basics of adolescent brain development; changes during puberty; thinking areas still developing; the power of emotions; adolescents interest in risky behaviors & passion; the dynamics of dating violence and the intersection with brain development. Moreover, participants will learn ideas on how to help victims and aggressors, especially in the formation of healthy dating relationships. Finally, participants will receive a packet of handouts and worksheets that they can share with adolescents and an opportunity to buy a CD with more resources. Information will also be provided on a workshop for youth that can be hosted at their local high school.

- I. The Beautiful Adolescent Brain
  - A. Basic Brain Parts
  - B. Prefrontal Cortex
  - C. Gender Differences
- II. Starting at the Beginning - Baby Brain Basics
  - A. Perry Model
    1. Trauma
    2. Neglect
  - B. Critical Windows of Development
  - C. Brain Plasticity
  - D. Attachment
    1. Secure attachment
    2. Insecure attachment
  - E. Three Psychological Hungers
    1. Stimulation
    2. Recognition
      - a. Relatedness
      - b. Autonomy
      - c. Competence
    3. Structure
- III. Basics of Adolescent Brain Development
  - A. Puberty
  - B. Three Stages of Development
  - C. Immaturity Gap
  - D. Thinking Areas Still Developing
    1. Three regions of the Prefrontal Cortex
    2. Differences in Childhood, Adolescent & Adult Thinking
    3. Social Cognition
  - E. Risk & Reward Circuit in the Brain
    1. Rise of Dopamine
    2. Adolescent Passion

- 3. Egocentrism
- IV. Status of Adolescent Dating Violence
  - A. Reporting procedures
  - B. Statistics
    - 1. National
    - 2. Wisconsin
- V. Dynamics of Adolescent Dating Violence
  - A. Power & Control
    - 1. Characteristics related to adolescent brain development
    - 2. Recognizing Abusive behavior
  - B. Equality in relationships
- VI. Working with Victims & Aggressors
  - A. So what does all this mean for your work?
  - B. Public awareness / prevention
  - C. Helping Victims
  - D. Working with Aggressors
  - E. Concept of Super Dater
    - 1. Examples from "DATER" game
  - F. Brainiac Worksheets
    - 1. I Am Assertive
    - 2. Boundaries
    - 3. Rights & Responsibilities
    - 4. Resources