

Discussion: News on Date Violence

Please read the news below carefully and answer questions

"A 21-year old girl ended the relationship with her ex-boyfriend who was put in jail two years ago. She then fell in love with another man, but was asked to get back together by her ex-boyfriend after he was released from prison. She and her family were threatened to be endangered if she refused. Feeling excessive shame to her family and unbearable by the repeated threats, the girl was found dead after jumping off the window of her flat."

Date violence is on rise particularly among teens, who use physical or verbal sexual abuse as a tool to control or to maintain relationship with the partner. Many teenagers believe that love is a kind of possession, or a partner should oblige to sexual relationship, which is indeed an idea misled by the popular culture. People who do not know how to respect and accept a partner do not really know what love is. Gender stereotype also reinforces the above beliefs, e.g., males can possess females, while females should be submissive to males. When partners were found not fulfilling these roles or duties, date violence would eventually take place. Besides, for teens who do not have guidelines on effective communication in family, tend to resolve problems by taking violence in intimate relationship.

To eliminate cases of date violence, teenagers need to understand what love is: to respect and to accept your partner. Learn to build up a critical mind will help teens to analyze issues or popular culture that is emerged by gender inequity. If you were unfortunately being abused in intimate relationship, do seek help from parents or friends. Committing suicide is never a solution to any matters; it brings grief and more complicated issues to your love ones.

1. Why do people opt for date violence to resolve problems?
2. Do you think what the girl (in the above news) had done could resolve date violence? And why?
3. How can we solve problems in intimate relationship effectively?
4. How do you perceive love? Does love mean everything to you?

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Teachers' Guidelines

1. To find reasons of rising cases of date violence in recent years, it is found partly due to normalization of date violence in popular culture. Saying love is possession of a partner, or being hurt in love relationship happens all the time, for instance, has romanticized date violence among teens. Besides, inequity of gender relation is reinforcing gender stereotype that males are expected to be economically superior, while females are supposed to be tame and submissive. Eventually, date violence is very likely to be happened if a person found his partner not fulfilling these roles. Date violence may also be a continuation of violence in family. Teens, who are exposed to gender-based violence at home tend to apply similar skills to resolve problems occurred in intimate relationship.
2. This girl chose to commit suicide had made the whole issue more complicated. She felt helpless and excessively exhausted when she heard her family would be in danger, and thought killing herself would be a way to get out of it. However, the loss of her life might trigger her ex-boyfriend to blame on her family on the one hand, and left sadness and unanswered questions to her family on the other hand.
3. To tackle problems effectively with your dating partner, you first need to know and to respect others' expectations. Do learn to communicate on basis of gender equality. If you found it hard to communicate with your partner or any date violence had been taken place, you should not hesitate to seek help from parents or professionals like social workers.
4. Life is not simply made up of love. We have families, friends, study life and so on. Learn to balance your life by development of all aspects, you will find how your life is fully-enriched by their support and achievements made.

Follow-up activity: Ask student to share any pop songs they are familiar with. Look at the lyrics and comment on the message of love relationships that is delivered.