

# Safe Dates USA



## Type of intervention



Classroom setting



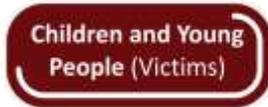
Theatrical

## Target groups, levels of prevention and sub-groups:



### Primary prevention

Young People (12-17 Years) | Male & Female | Classroom Setting, Theatrical | English, Spanish, French



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## Target population

Male and females aged 13-17 years.

## Delivery organisation

The materials are provided by Hazelden organisation in the USA, for delivery of the Safe Dates programme through schools.

The Institute for Children, Youth and Families at the University of Arizona has adapted the Safe Dates curriculum for youth of Native American, Hispanic and mixed ethnicity.

Safe Dates has been adapted and implemented in Australia, Canada, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand and the UK.

## Mode and context of delivery

Safe Dates is designed to be delivered in secondary/high schools to prevent emotional, physical and sexual abuse on dates and between young people in a dating relationship, through a taught curriculum. It is supported by written lessons plans and a teacher training programme. It is available in English, Spanish and French.

## Level/Nature of staff expertise required

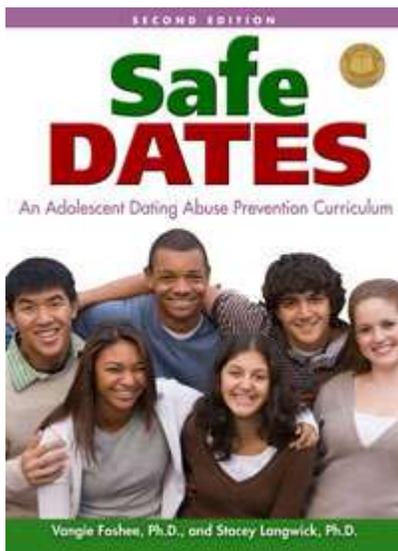
Safe Dates is intended to be delivered by a teacher, who has either taken part in training on materials or with the use of guidance materials, which are supplied with the curriculum.

## Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

Nine sessions; this can be supplemented with a booster session.

## Description of intervention

Information taken from <http://www.hazelden.org/web/public/safedatesproduct.page>:



*The Safe Dates curriculum is a ten-session program that targets attitudes and behaviors associated with dating abuse and violence. Each session is approximately 50 minutes in length. Safe Dates can be flexibly scheduled (e.g., daily or weekly sessions).*

*Reproducible student handouts for each session are included on the CD-ROM. If you do not have time to complete all ten sessions, the curriculum has suggestions for a six-session or four-session program. It is important to realize, however, that the fidelity of the product and accompanying outcomes are best maintained by completing all ten sessions.*

*We have developed a Fidelity Checklist showing what must be done to ensure fidelity.*

**Session 1: Defining Caring Relationships:** *Through a bingo game and class discussions, students are introduced to the Safe Dates program and they evaluate how they would like to be treated in dating relationships.*

**Session 2: Defining Dating Abuse:** *Through the discussion of scenarios and the review of statistics, students clearly define dating abuse.*

**Session 3: Why Do People Abuse?:** *Through large and small group discussions and the review of scenarios, students identify the causes and consequences of dating abuse.*

**Session 4: How to Help Friends:** *Through a decision-making exercise, a dramatic reading, and the introduction of the "Friend's Wheel," students learn why it is difficult to leave abusive relationships and how to help a friend if she or he is in an abusive relationship.*

**Session 5: Helping Friends:** *Through stories and role-playing, students practice effective skills for helping friends who are victims of abuse or confronting friends who are perpetrators of abuse.*

**Session 6: Overcoming Gender Stereotypes:** Through a writing exercise, small-group discussions, and scenarios, students learn about gender stereotypes and how these stereotypes can affect dating relationships.

**Session 7: How We Feel, How We Deal:** Through the use of a feelings diary and a discussion of "hot buttons," students learn effective ways to recognize and handle their anger, so it doesn't lead to abusive behavior.

**Session 8: Equal Power through Communication:** Students learn the four SAFE skills for effective communication and practice these skills in a variety of role-plays.

**Session 9: Preventing Sexual Assault:** Through taking a quiz and holding a caucus and a panel of their peers, students learn about the issue of sexual assault and how to prevent it from happening.

**Session 10: Reviewing the Safe Dates Program:** Through discussion, evaluation, and a poster contest, students will review the Safe Dates program.

**Dating Abuse Play:** As part of the Safe Dates program, you may want to present this forty-five-minute play about dating abuse and violence, which was written by high school drama students. Before presenting the play, consider sharing local statistics on the prevalence of teen dating abuse. Following the performance, have the actors lead discussions (preferably in small groups), with the audience about the issues presented in the play.

Consider presenting this play as a schoolwide assembly, as part of your school's drama program, or at other school or community events. You do not need professional actors. Enlist the help of your school's drama department or put on the play with your own students.

**Poster Contest:** Hosting a poster contest is a great way to reinforce the concepts learned in the curriculum. Posters on the theme of dating abuse prevention can be displayed in school hallways or other community buildings such as libraries, city hall or community centers, and shopping malls. Students could also use their posters when giving presentations to various school or community groups.

**Parent Materials:** As in every strong prevention effort, it is important to get your students' parents or guardians involved in your Safe Dates program. A letter informing caregivers of the Safe Dates program is located on the CD-ROM, as is a two-page education newsletter that you can send to parents and guardians or keep on hand, in case you need to talk to a caregiver about this issue. Consider mailing the letter and newsletter together.

For those teachers and families who choose to dig deeper into the issue of adolescent dating abuse, Families for Safe Dates is a comprehensive, research-based program included on the CD-ROM. Families for Safe Dates includes six booklets that contain background information and activities for caregivers and teens to do together as they learn about different topics regarding adolescent dating abuse.

## **Evaluation**

Safe Dates has been evaluated in three major studies, which showed statistically significant decreases in sexual abuse perpetration against a dating partner and significant reduction in sexual abuse victimisation. Other forms of abuse (emotional and physical) are also reduced following programme. See references below. See NREPP SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence Based Programmes and Practices [www.nrepp.samhsa.gov](http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov) for details of evaluation outcomes.

## **References**

Foshee, V.A. Bauman, K. E., Arriaga, X. B., Helms, R. W., Koch, G. G., &Linder, G. F. (1998). An evaluation of Safe Dates, an adolescent dating violence prevention programme. American Journal of Public Health, 88 (1), 45- 50.

Foshee, V. A., Bauman, K.E., Ennet, S.T., Linder, G.F., Benefield, T., & Suchindran, C. (2004). Assessing the long term effects of the Safe Dats program and a booster in preventing and reducing adolescent dating violence victimisation and perpetration. American Journal of Public Health, 94 (4), 619 -624.

Foshee, V.A., Baumann, K.E., Ennett, S.T., Suchindran, C., Benefield, T., &Linder, G.F. (2005). Assessing the long term effects of the dating violence prevention program Safe Dates using random coefficient modelling. Prevention Science, 6(3), 245 -258.

## **Contact details**

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<http://www.hazeldon.org/safedates>