

The Virgin Islands Consortium

'Youth Wise Up' Event To Address Teen Dating Violence

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ST. CROIX -- The Virgin Islands Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Council (D.V.S.A.C.) is calling all teens ages 13-19, to attend its annual "Youth Wise Up" event on Saturday, February 6, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the University of the Virgin Islands' Great Hall, according to a press release D.V.S.A.C. issued on Tuesday.

According to the release, Youth Wise Up is a highly anticipated event offering community service hours and providing teens with critical information on teen dating violence prevention, and is hosted every February by D.V.S.A.C. in honor of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

The local theme for 2016 is "Media and Culture Talk," and will feature a keynote address from Dilsa Capdeville, executive director of [Kidscope](#), who will address the landscape of teen dating violence in the territory. Additional sessions will be provided by representatives from the U.S. Attorney's Office, the U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement, Department of Health and independent local musicians.

Each session will address topics on either technology, sexting, sex trafficking, social media, substance abuse, culture and the role of local music in preventing teen dating violence. Thereafter, participants will have an opportunity to obtain additional resources from informational tables provided by community partners and organizations, according to the release.

"Teens are affected by family violence in their homes but also teen dating violence in their own relationships. As an outreach specialist, I provide prevention education in many of our elementary, junior high and high schools and it is alarming how many students share stories about their exposure to some form of domestic violence or sexual assault in their homes and even their schools. Violence is not an adult issue but a teen issue as well," said Natalie Joseph, community outreach specialist in the St. Croix district.

According to www.LoveisRespect.com, DVSA's number one ecommended site for teens, 1 in 10 high school students have been purposefully hit, slapped or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend. It says that girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence — almost triple the national average. And the website also says that violent behavior typically begins between the ages of 12 and 18'.

For more information about the St. Croix event, email natalie@vidvsac.net. For the St. Thomas event, which takes place on February 27, email Jeanette@vidvsac.net. For more information on D.V.S.A.C., or the national Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month theme 'Love = Setting Boundaries', call (340) 719-0144 or email info@vidvsac.net. Follow D.V.S.A.C. by liking its [Facebook page](#).