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**BROWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AWARDED GRANT  
TO HELP PREVENT TEEN DATING VIOLENCE**

*Broward County Health Department one of four to receive national award for "Dating Matters"*

(Fort Lauderdale, FL) – On September 13, 2011, Vice President Joe Biden announced that Broward County Health Department is receiving a grant for \$1.75 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to participate in a violence prevention initiative aimed at preventing teen dating violence. The grant is expected to cover five years.

Across the country, one in 10 high school students has experienced physical violence from a dating partner in the past year, and one in four reports verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual dating violence each year according to a CDC national survey.

The grant will allow Broward County to join Baltimore, Chicago and Oakland/Hayward in developing, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive approach to prevent teen dating violence before it starts. The approach is expected to include evidence-based student and parent programs, educator training, local policy development and enhancement, and communications strategies like social networking and brand ambassadors.

“The Broward County Health Department, in partnership with the CDC and Broward County Public Schools, is excited about the opportunity to lead the effort to prevent youth dating violence in our community. The CDC funding will increase public health capacity and provide for the implementation of sustainable strategies,” said Paula Thaqi, M.D., M.P.H., Director of the Broward County Health Department.

CDC developed the initiative, called *Dating Matters: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships*. The roll-out of the initiative in this five-year demonstration phase will help CDC examine the cost, feasibility, sustainability, and effectiveness of a comprehensive approach to teen dating violence in four high-risk urban communities, including Broward County. CDC also seeks to build the health department’s capacity to become the primary agent for dating violence prevention programming in Broward County, implementing evidence-based violence prevention strategies as well as identifying risk factors for teen dating violence.

“Teen violence is a serious yet preventable public health problem that requires a coordinated and comprehensive community response,” said Dr. Thaqi.

To learn more about Broward County Health Department efforts to prevent teen dating violence, please call (954) 467-4700 extension 4002.

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