

Shared Blessings

Mia's boyfriend told her she was garbage.

Now, she knows better.

With your help, she's showing other teens they are worthy of respect and safety.

Mia began a relationship with her boyfriend, Allen, when she was just 16 years old. The relationship progressed rapidly. Within 2 weeks, Allen professed his love. Within a month, they lived together — first with Mia's mom and then with Allen's family.

Within 18 months, Mia contemplated suicide because of devastating emotional abuse.

"With him, I experienced severe mental and emotional abuse. I got to the point where I completely and utterly believed that I was the problem. Everything about me was bad. Everything that I did was wrong."

Mia changed her entire life to suit Allen's whims.

"At that point, I was dedicating my life to changing myself. For those two years, I was not Mia. I was not myself. My senior year of high school, I was a different person. I used to be happy and normal. But senior year, I didn't care about my appearance. I didn't talk to anyone. I looked like I didn't want to live anymore because that's how I felt."

**"Everything about me was bad.
Everything that I did was wrong."**

—Mia

Finally, one friend stepped up. One friend said YOU DON'T DESERVE THIS.

"I credit her for the fact that I left," Mia says. "If it wasn't for her, I would probably still be with him. He was so good at making me believe that I was the problem."

Thank you for stepping up to support teens like Mia – and all survivors.

Because of you, teens are learning about healthy relationships, dating red flags, and how to get (and give) help.

Mia's friend supported her as she made a plan to leave. The next day, Mia moved home with her mom.

But Allen pushed his way back into her life, even though Mia tried to set boundaries.





"I tried to tell him what I liked and didn't like. But that didn't last long," she says. "The crazy thing is that I was still thinking that I had to change. I would genuinely ask him, 'What do I need to do? What do I need to change to make you stop screaming at me and calling me names and treating me this way?'"

Finally, Mia confided in her mother, who didn't know details of the abuse.

"She didn't know anything," Mia says. "She didn't know I was dying inside."

With her mother's support, Mia packed up Allen's things, blocked his number, and ended the relationship. She never saw him again.

Today, Mia encourages others to reach out if they suspect abuse. She is so grateful for that one new friend who spoke up. But still, she wonders: Why didn't others help?

"I feel like somebody should have saved me from that because it was really bad."

Thank you for being the one who helps. Thank you for showing survivors they are worthy of respect and safety.

Today, I got to do the best part of my job. I got to tell a donor exactly how they made a difference in the life of a survivor of abuse.

A wonderful couple donated a car; a local mechanic (shout out to Ben's Garage in Brownsburg) took time to make repairs; and as a result, a woman and her family have a vehicle.

Every gift given here has the power to change a life.

Whether it's a car, a gift of stock, a gift left in a will, or something else—giving is a powerful act of love.

Thank you to everyone who cares enough to give. You are saving lives and what you have done is so important.

As you plan your 2026 giving, I'd love to talk. A gift of stock, a gift through your donor advised fund, or a distribution from your retirement account might be able to have an impact you never imagined! We've seen it happen!



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UPCOMING EVENTS



MARCH 19
Men IN Action READ



APRIL 18
Premier Event "Bigger Than Us"



REAL LOVE RESPECTS

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Healthy love isn't saying "I love you" and sending heart emojis. It's showing up with trust, honesty and respect.

During Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM) 2026, we want all youth to understand that **REAL LOVE RESPECTS**.

In February, Sheltering Wings is joining the national TDVAM campaign through LovesRespect.org to reinforce the message that respect in a relationship isn't a bonus. It's a requirement. Healthy love is built on mutual respect and understanding. That means honoring your boundaries, your feelings, your choices, and everything that makes you authentically you. In a world full of mixed messages, this theme centers around one truth: Respect is non-negotiable.

Respect is everything. It's earned. It's honest. It never makes you question your worth.



To learn more about TDVAM and how to help your teen build healthy relationships, visit ShelteringWings.org/Teens.

WHAT IS RESPECT?

When I was young, I was told that men, in particular, must be respected to feel love. What folks meant was men must be given authority over others and obeyed to feel loved.

You may have heard the same message growing up—learning about respect through the lens of authority and obedience.

As parents and mentors, we need to reframe this word. Respect applies to both partners in a relationship.

At a recent Teens That Talk Youth Council meeting, I asked high school students: What does respect mean to you? Their answers give me hope.

- Complete trust in another person.
- Seeing that someone's words match their actions.
- Mutual understanding of each other's feelings.

- Understanding my partner's point of view.
- Being communicative.
- Understanding and honoring the other person's values.
- Treating others the way you want to be treated.
- Understanding and honoring boundaries and comfort zones.
- Understanding. Empathy. Boundaries.
- Taking ownership of my actions and reactions.
- Acting with love.
- Doing what is right for me and them.

Your gifts support Teens That Talk and all of our youth education and prevention programs. Thank you for helping teens build healthy relationships based on respect.



Jarod Haskell
Prevention Education Officer

LOOK WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE

Preventing Teen Abuse

Your support makes a difference in the lives of teens and their families in all corners of Hendricks County. Because of you, teens in every public school district learn about healthy relationships, healthy communication, and teen violence red flags. Thank you for helping the next generation break the cycle of abuse.

2,815 HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS received classroom visits from our prevention staff in 2025. Thanks to you, these teens are on the path to a healthy future.

6 of 6 ALL SIX HENDRICKS COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS hosted Prevention programs, impacting families in every local community.

110 TEENS ATTENDED HOP 4 HOPE IN 2025. Free trampolines, dodgeball, pizza—and important information about healthy communications and safe relationships.

13 FOR THE PAST 13 YEARS Youth Council has engaged Hendricks County teens to raise awareness about teen dating violence and help stop the cycle of abuse.



Hop 4 Hope

Food, dodgeball, games, fun—and raising awareness about teen dating violence. Open to ALL Hendricks County high school students.

FEBRUARY 17 | 4:30 pm

Urban Air, Plainfield

Register: ShelteringWings.org/Teens

YOUR GIFT HELPS TEENS BREAK THE CYCLE OF ABUSE.

Teens are not immune from domestic violence

- 1 in 3 has been verbally, emotionally or physically abused by a dating partner
- 1 in 10 high school students report being hit by a dating partner
- 1 in 11 Indiana high school students report being physically forced to have sex

You help teens build relationships based on respect—not abuse. To give, scan the QR code or use the enclosed envelope to mail your gift. Thank you for setting teens on the path to a healthy future.

