

A Partnership for Change (APFC) YTD Report for PowerBack: 2009 - 2016

Mission Statement

A Partnership for Change (APFC) is a 501(c) (3) private, non-profit organization serving all of New Jersey. APFC's mission is to end the increasing problem of intimate partner abuse through the provision of comprehensive educational programs that empower people with practical tools and information on how to safely and effectively support clients, students, colleagues, community members, friends, or family.

The Issue

National statistics reveal that one in four women and one in three teenage girls will experience domestic or dating abuse in her lifetime. In New Jersey, intimate partner violence is also a widespread problem: The most recent *New Jersey Uniform Crime Report* (2014) reveals that there were 62,055 domestic violence offenses reported by the police in our state.

Our Work

APFC recognizes that many of the critical issues that confront us today – bullying, teen pregnancy, high dropout rates, gang violence, poverty, substance abuse, child abuse, depression and street crime – can be linked to exposure to domestic violence in the home. Through our experience we know that education and awareness programs play a key role in reducing intimate partner abuse, and that all community members are needed to initiate change, hold abusers accountable, and to help in this effort. Together, we can make a difference.

APFC Programs

Our programs can be tailored to meet the needs of any group or organization. Current initiatives include:

- PowerBack: A Teen Dating Abuse Prevention Program
- Police Response Enhancement Program (PREP)
- The IPVA (Intimate Partner Violence Advocate) Certification Program
- Fee-based workshops offered to community groups and professional organizations

APFC Co-Founders & Co-Directors

APFC was founded in 2007 by Allison Bressler, MA and Gloria Sgrizzi after they identified a gap in domestic violence education services in New Jersey. Together they have more than 25 years of experience in the field of domestic violence ranging from direct counseling, crisis intervention, community education and outreach, school-based prevention programs, fundraising and public relations. Ms. Bressler and Ms. Sgrizzi develop, conduct and implement all current programs.

Board of Trustees

Thomas Buchbinder, *President*; Susanne Caruso, CPA, *Treasurer*; Peter Briggs, *Secretary*; Adrienne Taub Weber, *Trustee*.

PowerBack: A Teen Dating Abuse Prevention Program



PowerBack is our signature initiative designed to reduce dating abuse and to educate high school students on how to safely and effectively help their peers who are victims of dating abuse or who witness abuse at home. The program addresses the escalating problem of dating/domestic violence and the need to educate young people on how to help themselves, a friend or loved one.

Since 2009, APFC has surveyed **10,395 teens in New Jersey** about dating abuse and domestic violence:

- ✓ 72% say that dating abuse is happening at their school
- ✓ 63% of girls and 37% of boys *personally* know a victim
- ✓ 26% of girls and 18% of boys report being verbally and emotionally abused by a partner
- ✓ 11% of girls said they have submitted to sex out of fear of their partner
- ✓ 36% believe that victims are “somewhat” responsible for the abuse (victim-blaming)
- ✓ 82% of girls and 44% of boys say that they want to learn more about the issue
- ✓ **74% of students would first reach out to a friend** for advice and support rather than a parent, teacher, school counselor, hotline, or other adult (and often give each other inappropriate or dangerous advice)
- ✓ 21% tell us that they have witnessed domestic violence at home (more than 2,000 families affected!)

PowerBack has been operating since 2009 with the support of STOP VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) federal funds via the NJ Division of Criminal Justice. This funding supports the program in three schools per year; each school gets the program for two years then we move on to new schools.

PowerBack is unique because *there is no other teen dating abuse prevention program* in the state that is as comprehensive; it operates from September through June and reaches teens AND adults. Components include:

- School-wide, interactive **forums** launch PowerBack in the fall; students receive materials, resources and complete an anonymous survey. At the end, we invite students to join PowerBack to learn how to become peer leaders on campus.
- PowerBack **monthly meetings** provide in-depth education on the issue and offer a safe environment for students to trouble-shoot incidents at home or at school. Peer leaders **MUST** pass our certification exam and agree to work on a committee to plan and implement a school-wide awareness event. APFC provides all materials and event supplies.
- Workshops for **adults** include clinical staff, school nurses, faculty, administrators, coaches, parents, caregivers and guardians. Classes provide a wider safety net for victims by teaching adults how to effectively respond to teens.
- Individual psycho-educational **support sessions**: This component was implemented in 2014 to meet the demand for one-on-one support services. Current funding allows us to offer up to 20 private counseling sessions per year for any student or a non-offending parent of a student who is a victim of domestic violence.

Schools that have hosted the full PowerBack program since 2009:

- Abraham Clark HS, Roselle, NJ
- David Brearley HS, Kenilworth, NJ
- Cliffside Park HS
- Roselle Park HS
- Lodi HS
- Henry Snyder HS, Jersey City, NJ
- Jonathan Dayton HS, Springfield, NJ
- Bogota HS
- Academy of the Holy Angels, Demarest, NJ
- Union Catholic HS, Scotch Plains, NJ
- RiverDell HS, Oradell, NJ
- Rahway HS

PowerBack Quantitative Outcomes (2009 – 2016):

978	Number of School Staff Educated
353	Number of Parents/Guardians Educated
352	Number of Students Certified as Peer Leaders
579	Number of Student Victims Served
75	Number of Adult Victims Served
32	Number of Victims provided with Individual Counseling Sessions (newer component offered since 2014)
13,000+	Number of Students Reached at Awareness Events

PowerBack Qualitative Outcomes (2009 – 2016):

In order to receive Peer Leader status, members must pass our Certification Exam and complete a self-evaluation, which help us to track qualitative performance measures; we are pleased to report the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 98% were able to identify steps to take to safely intervene and help a peer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 98% were able to correctly recognize the warning signs of abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% were able to identify community resources for help and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% learned how to develop a safety plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 54% of Peer Leaders reported that they helped a friend or family member by providing support, information and referral to a hotline

Selected comments from Peer Leaders on their evaluation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>The stories convinced me to tell my story and open up to others.</i> ✓ <i>It's great that you talk to us about this because no one informs us about these issues.</i> ✓ <i>PowerBack helped me to get a friend out of a relationship that wasn't safe.</i> ✓ <i>I felt understood in the PowerBack meetings.</i> ✓ <i>I learned who to talk to and where to go for help.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>It opened a lot of girls [sic] eyes to things they never considered abuse.</i> ✓ <i>PowerBack is amazing. Thank you for coming over and giving us such important info.</i> ✓ <i>Meetings helped me realize a lot about my own relationship.</i> ✓ <i>We need to have more meetings!</i> |
|---|---|

“Students really embraced PowerBack; I have seen it make a dramatic change in our student body.” – Sarah Costa, Principal of Roselle Park HS

“Not only students but faculty and parents have expressed a strong desire to continue the program.” – Brian Luciani, Principal of David Brearley HS

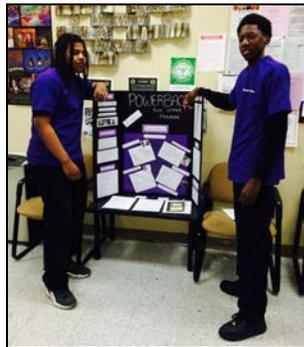
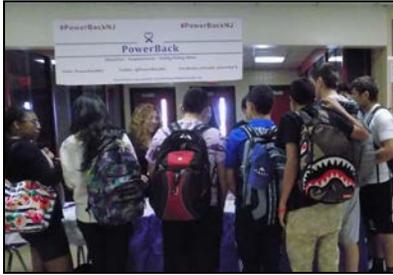
Schools that Hosted Teen Forums & Professional Development Workshops

The following schools or organizations have hosted a component of PowerBack – either a teen forum or professional workshop on teen dating abuse. These programs were offered with special limited funding, pro-bono, or modest fee:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Providence HS ▪ Teaneck HS ▪ Barringer Academy, Newark ▪ Mahwah HS ▪ Plainfield HS ▪ Dunellen HS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ridgewood HS ▪ Livingston HS ▪ Jefferson Township HS ▪ Keansburg HS ▪ Arthur Johnson HS, Clark, NJ ▪ Park Ridge HS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Midland Park HS ▪ Roselle Collaborative Teen Group ▪ Jewish Renaissance Fdn., Perth Amboy, NJ ▪ Catholic Charities, Jersey City |
|---|---|--|

PowerBack Awareness Events

Every year, PowerBack Peer Leaders design and implement awareness events on campus and speak out against abuse and promote healthy relationships on social media...



Other Workshops & Presentations on Teen Dating Abuse

APFC is invited by schools, professional organizations, or community groups to present workshops on Teen Dating Abuse and/or The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children. Since 2009, we have presented at:

- Keynote address on Teen Dating Abuse at the **New Jersey Association of Juvenile Officers** statewide conference
- Workshop on Teen Dating Abuse at **Kean University** for the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
- Workshop on Teen Dating Abuse at the Annual Conference for **Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey**
- Professional Development Day workshops for faculty and counselors of the **Carlstadt School District**
- Teen Group Presentation for young women at **Someone's Daughter**, Elizabeth, NJ
- Two Workshops at the **NJ School Counselors Association** Spring Institute
- Keynote Address on Teen Dating Abuse at the **Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office** Conference
- Keynote Address (and two workshops) at the **Cape May County Prosecutor's Office** Annual Conference
- Presentation on Teen Dating Abuse the **Strong Tower Church & Resource Center**, Glassboro, NJ in 2013
- Workshop for members of the **Student Assistance Counselors Association**, Paramus, NJ
- Workshops for employees of **Robin's Nest Community Services**, Glassboro, NJ
- Seminars for **HPAE** (Health Professionals & Allied Employees) members, Kenilworth, NJ
- Workshop on Teen Dating Abuse for hotline staff at **180 Turning Lives Around**, Hazlet, NJ
- Workshops for employees at the **Burlington County Department of Health & Human Services**
- "Lunch & Learn" Seminar on Teen Dating Abuse for employees of **Chubb & Sons**, Basking Ridge, NJ
- Presentation for Parents on Teen Dating Abuse hosted by the **Verona Police Department**