

# Teens Learn What is... and is Not... a Healthy Relationship

It was billed as "speed dating," but the 45 teens who showed up on November 18 in Lusk Hall were in for a bigger surprise than just meeting new people. Pre-arranged, a handful of kids had agreed to slip in some inappropriate comments (written by adults with domestic abuse experience) which would signal them as potentially unhealthy, or even abusive,



Speed Dating in action.

who runs Temple Beth El's Post-Confirmation Class, and Caroline Biber, a therapist with expertise in domestic abuse at Jewish Family Services.

Billed as "Speed Dating: Building Healthy Relationships," the event was co-sponsored by B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, (BBYO), LIBERTY, Consolidated High School, Levine JCC Teen Department, Jewish Family Services, TI-Y USY and Shalom Bayit-NC. Teens of high school age wrestled with difficult questions such as "what is abuse, what is your personal 'bottom line' of acceptable behavior, how do you

help a friend who is being abused, and what can boys do to counter-act abuse?"

Materials on healthy relationships and where teens can go for help, as well as general informa-

tion on domestic abuse in the Jewish community, can be obtained by contacting Shalom Bayit-NC at [info@shalombayit-nc.org](mailto:info@shalombayit-nc.org) or checking their web site at [www.shalombayit-nc.org](http://www.shalombayit-nc.org). ☆



Lindsay Trapani of Temple Beth El (left) and Daniel Comen of Temple Israel (far right) sign-up with registrants, BBYO Regional Director Ellen Goldstein (second from left) and Levine JCC Teen Director Christa Cohen.

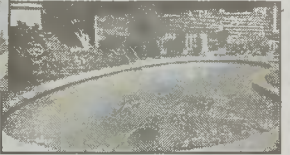
partners. After revealing the ruse, the teens were split off by gender for discussions led by Andrew Bernstein

### Teens: What to Do If You Are in an Abusive Relationship

- If you are in immediate physical danger, call 911.
- Call a hotline for advice or just to talk. Hotlines are free and confidential, so anything you say is private and will never be repeated to anyone.
- National Teen Dating Violence Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 or 1-866-331-8453. This is a 24/7 confidential helpline. You can also chat online anonymously through the website [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org).
- National Youth Crisis Hotline 1-800-442-HOPE (4673).
- Covenant House Ninline 1-800-999-9999. A 24-hour, confidential and immediate crisis intervention service for teens and parents.
- The Gay & Lesbian National Hotline 1-888-834-4564.
- Confide in a friend, parent, teacher or other adult who you trust.
- Write in a journal about the relationship and the way it is making you feel.
- Trust yourself. If it feel's wrong, you're right.



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## Types of Comments That Can Spell Trouble Used at "Speed Dating: Building Healthy Relationships" Event

\* If we are together, I want you to be all mine. You won't need to hang out with your friends as much as you have been.

\* Do you have a cell phone and can I have your number so we can stay in touch all the time?

\* You know, if you're good to me, I'll be good to you. If you treat me right, I'll treat you right.

\* Girls are way too emotional. I'm looking for a girl who doesn't cry all the time.

\* You won't wear that when we go out, will you?

\* My last girlfriend/boyfriend really broke my heart. You have to promise me that you won't do that.

\* I get really mad when people are late so you need to always be on time.

\* I don't believe in taking things slow. When you like each other, you just go for it.

\* I really like girls/boys with long hair. Would you change your hair for me?

\* When my last boyfriend/girlfriend broke up with me, I thought about killing myself.

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