

EDITORIAL OPINION

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Teen dating violence an important topic



Your Turn
Linda Oberhaus
Guest columnist

Five years after the murder-suicide that took their lives, the faces of Immo-kalee teens Coby Martinez Deleon, 18, and Natalia Trejo, 17, still look out from their Facebook pages, a testament to the tragic reality of teen dating violence. A final post on Coby's page still reads, "Nat was here :)"

Today in America, 1.5 million teens are experiencing some form of abuse at the hands of a dating partner. The goal of February's National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is to raise awareness, promote prevention and reduce those numbers.

If you believe teen dating violence does not affect you, think again. The economic impact of domestic violence in America is approximately \$8.3 billion per year in medical costs and lost wages. By investing in adolescent awareness and prevention programs, we will save thousands of lives and billions of dollars.

Many parents think they would know if their child was in a violent relationship, but statistics show that 81% were

unaware that their teen had been physically hurt by a dating partner and only 33% of teens suffering such abuse ever talked to anyone about what was happening to them.

Dating violence is any situation in which one partner purposefully causes emotional, physical or sexual harm to another. Unhealthy relationships can start early and last a lifetime. With technology at their fingertips 24 hours a day, teens are more vulnerable to dating violence than ever before.

Here at The Shelter, we believe prevention and education are key in addressing and reducing incidents of teen dating violence. Last year, thanks to a strong partnership with Collier County Public Schools, The Shelter's school-based programs reached more than 16,000 teens, helping them to recognize and avoid unhealthy dating relationships.

Because the abusing partner is most often male, The Shelter offers the Raising Gentle men program, which encourages boys and young men to challenge macho stereotypes that equate masculinity with control and physical aggression. The curriculum focuses on empathy and understanding of others, social skills, increased self-esteem, problem solving, sense of personal power and belonging, respect and tolerance and

Guest commentaries

A guest commentary can be 600 words or less on a topical subject. Authors must have considerable experience, public involvement or expertise in the subject matter. Due to the large number of guest commentaries we receive, these may be returned to the author with a recommendation to resubmit it as a letter to the editor within the guidelines for letters. Submit to letters@naplesnews.com.

healthy lifestyle choices.

According to loveisrespect.org, statistics for female victims is much higher than their male counterparts, with as many as one in three girls suffering some form of teen dating violence.

Girls often fail to seek help because they feel responsible for solving problems in their relationships. They may see their boyfriend's jealousy, possessiveness and even physical abuse, as "romantic." Some girls may see abuse as "normal" because their friends and/or family members are also being abused.

Through its Expect Respect and Healthy Relationships programs, The Shelter helps girls recognize different types of abuse, the dynamics of dating violence, characteristics of unhealthy

and healthy relationships and how to set boundaries in a relationship.

Signs to look for in an abuser include excessive jealousy, constant checking in, isolating the victim from friends and/or family, controlling behavior, name calling, explosive temper, refusal to take responsibility and blaming others for his/her actions.

Signs that a teen may be a victim of dating violence include physical injury (often hidden by clothing), skipping school, failing grades, changes in mood or personality, emotional outbursts, and isolation.

If you have noticed these signs or behavior changes in a teen, it is important to speak up and get help.

Coby and Natalia are dearly missed in their community. It is hard to say whether early intervention would have changed the terrible ending of their short lives, but their story can be a lesson to us all. You have the ability to save lives by recognizing the signs, reaching out, and reporting any activity that you feel may be abusive.

If you or someone you know needs help, call The Shelter's 24-hour Crisis Line at 239-775-1101. More information on The Shelter and its services is available online at www.naplesshelter.org.

Linda Oberhaus is the CEO of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, Feb. 10, the 41st day of 2021. There are 324 days left in the year.

On this date in:

1936: Nazi Germany's Reichstag passed a law investing the Gestapo secret police with absolute authority, exempt from any legal review.

1962: The Soviet Union exchanged captured American U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers for Rudolf Abel, a Soviet spy held by the United States.

1992: Boxer Mike Tyson was convicted in Indianapolis of raping Desiree Washington, a Miss Black America contestant. (Tyson served three years in prison.)

2014: Former film star and diplomat Shirley Temple Black, 85, died at her home near San Francisco.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: VACCINATIONS

Please help the elderly

Your paper ignored the subject today. I am one of thousands of over 80 years of age, (85) with Stage 4 Kidney disease and COPD. I use oxygen 24 hours a day, including help from a ventilator.

I have gone online everyday without any luck. I meet up with others my age and they are having the same luck.

I am on the state site and had a call back when I was at a doctors appointment. They left a message to call back, giving me the telephone number used by millions of people in the state — the same number for H[hospitals, doctors and anyone who has a question. I waited for two hours and gave up.

The governor and his henchmen appear to not have any goals. Please keep going after him. We need to embarrass him to get things right and maybe keep me alive.

Bob Hollander, Fort Myers

Don't play politics with vaccine

It has never been more clear that Governor DeSantis is the "Governor of the people". But wait, as was apparent to me on both Wednesday and Friday morning, DeSantis is Governor only to "his" people. Let me explain my disgust.

After receiving a big campaign donation by Publix, the grocery chain was rewarded with tens of thousands of doses of Covid vaccine by our governor to distribute at their grocery stores. However, while waiting on the Publix website for an hour and a half, one could realize that Governor DeSantis has decided that only counties that voted Republican get the chance to offer the Publix Covid vaccine.

While opportunity to get a vaccine at Publix in the Republican-leaning Panhandle, for example, was plentiful, Democratic leaning counties like Miami-Dade, Broward, Duval, Leon, Orange and Seminole were not even included.

This is not a coincidence. This is simply another example of how the country has been so divided by those who govern in a self-serving way. And it's guys like DeSantis who need to knock it off. He needs to understand that he has the pleasure of governing for those who did not vote for him as well as those who did.

Actually, there was one Democratic-leaning County that did receive the Publix offered vaccines — Palm Beach County. Could this be because a certain former President has de-

ecided to make Palm Beach County his home?

I, for one, am disgusted with our governor using Covid to play politics.

Jeffrey T. Scuteri, Sanibel

More knocks against governor

Is it time for an "Old Peoples' March on Tallahassee" to demand the Governor of Florida get the Covid Vaccine out to those of us 65 and older?

Daily, I am hearing from friends all over the country who have received one or both shots. Many come from populous states. Why can't Florida do this? Like so many, I have spent hours online in the DeSantis Vaccine Lotteries both through the State Health Department and through Publix Pharmacy.

Like most of my contemporaries, I signed up for the "new" notification system and have heard nothing. Why is our governor holding back life saving vaccine? Come on Ron DeSantis give us the vaccine!

Mark Delligatti, Naples

Leadership ineptitude

I am a 91-year-old seasonal resident of Florida. I have spent many hours on the phone and the internet attempting to make an appointment for the COVID-19 vaccine. It has been to no avail. My efforts have been frustrating and anxiety driven.

I fail to understand why state leaders were unable to anticipate the problems that have been created with their approach to vaccine distribution. Allowing 4.5 million seniors and many others in nursing and assisted living facilities to simultaneously seek vaccines in conjunction with high risk medical workers and others was unrealistic. The demand for the vaccine far exceeded availability. It imposed demands on communication systems that exceeded their capacity. Weekly scheduling of appointments exacerbated the problem.

Florida leaders need only look to other States for effective approaches for vaccine distribution. Massachusetts is a good example. A Three Phase approach beginning with high risk medical and other personnel followed by 75 year old seniors is being successfully implemented. It is a six month process that has been readily accepted by residents.

Although the path of ineptitude continues in Florida, it is not too late to make improvements.

Frank O'Connor, Bonita Springs

TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS

Actor **Robert Wagner** is 91. Singer **Roberta Flack** is 84. "Good Morning America" co-host

George Stephanopoulos is 60. Actor **Laura Dern** is 54. Actor **Elizabeth Banks** is 47. Actor

Emma Roberts ("American Horror Story,"

"We're the Millers") is

30. Actor **Yara Shahidi**

("black-ish") is 21.

BIBLE QUOTE

In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? — Psalm 56:4

LETTERS POLICY

Note to readers: The Naples Daily News has revised its guidelines for letters to the editor. Letters can be 220 words or less. We might edit them for accuracy, clarity and taste, to eliminate personal attacks and prevent libel. We might reject letters or return them to senders, who can rewrite them for resubmission. The sources of statistics or assertions of facts that aren't common knowledge must be cited in the same sentences. No poetry, letter-writing campaigns or airing of personal grievances or complaints about businesses will be considered. Submissions must be made online via the form at [naplesnews.com](https://www.naplesnews.com) or by email to letters@naplesnews.com. Publication is limited to one letter per writer per month. For verification, letter writers must provide a home address and phone number, but only the community name will be published with the letter writer's name. The Daily News strives to print as many letters as possible, but not all letters will be published. Shorter letters are preferred so that more writers can be included. Priority also is given to letters about local events and issues.

Seeing impeachment through a party lens

Paul Rosenzweig
Special to USA Today

It seems almost inevitable that the Senate will vote against convicting former President Donald Trump on the insurrection impeachment charge filed by the House. Given the evidence, this would be a grievous injury to our democracy.

And while the Republicans who choose to ignore Trump's attempt to subvert an election will bear most of the blame, spare a thought for the Democrats and the role they played in bringing us to this place in history. For they sowed the seeds for this error more than two decades ago during the impeachment of President Bill Clinton.

To be clear, the two cases are not in any way substantively comparable. Clinton's impeachable acts were tawdry and violated criminal law, but they pale next to the egregious anti-democratic insurrection that Trump incited. Nonetheless, in rejecting Clinton's impeachment, the Democratic Party set an important precedent of partisan disregard for presidential misconduct.

Clinton's wrongdoing, it was said, was "lying about sex," a family matter of no real concern to the general public. And there is a degree of truth to this. Clinton's acts involved personal wrongdoing that, as far as the public record reflects, had little or no impact on his exercise of presidential authority.

Trump, by contrast, retaliated against those who exposed his misconduct and then again abused presidential power by inciting a riot in an effort to overturn an election. But to say Clinton simply lied about a private affair is false.

I was part of independent counsel Ken Starr's team that investigated Clinton. We found that Clinton did not merely lie about an affair — he did so under oath during court proceedings on at least two occasions. He did not merely seek to hide the fact that he was cheating on his wife — he attempted to obstruct justice and tampered with witnesses to do so. This is not just personal misconduct; he violated legal norms that bind all Americans.

Far from being dismissed as private errors, these are crimes. And when

committed by the chief law enforcement officer of the United States, they are crimes of national significance, even when the background lies in personal peccadillo. If the Clinton impeachment was about anything, it was about holding a president to the same standard as an average citizen.

And yet the Senate, in 1999, chose to see the impeachment charges as partisan animus and rejected them as an assault on Clinton's election and policies.

Perhaps they were right, in a relative sense. I have little doubt that some Republicans advocated Clinton's impeachment for political reasons rather than on principle.

But someone has to stand up for principle. Or at least someone should have. By excusing Clinton's conduct, the Senate took an irrevocable step on the slippery path to partisan relativism.

Paul Rosenzweig, a senior fellow in the National Security and Cyber Security Program at the R Street Institute, was senior counsel to Ken Starr in the Whitewater investigation of Bill Clinton and a Homeland Security official in the George W. Bush administration.