



Calvert County News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CAASA Highlights Link Between Teen Dating Violence and Substance Misuse

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – Feb. 2, 2026 – February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and this year’s theme: “Respect That!” highlights the importance of healthy and respectful teen relationships.

Teen dating violence and substance misuse are closely connected. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in 12 U.S. high school students experience physical dating violence, and 1 in 10 experience sexual dating violence each year. Teens in abusive relationships are at greater risk for substance misuse, often using alcohol or other drugs to cope. Substance use can also impair judgment and increase vulnerability.

The Calvert Alliance Against Substance Abuse (CAASA) focuses on prevention by strengthening protective factors such as healthy communication, coping skills, emotional regulation and trusted adult connections – strategies that reduce both substance misuse and dating violence.

“Promoting healthy relationships and positive coping skills helps young people make safer choices,” Kimberly Shoe, president of the CAASA Board of Directors, said.

CAASA encourages parents, educators and youth-serving organizations to talk openly with teens about relationships, stress and where to get help. National data shows that only about one-third of teens experiencing dating violence tell someone else, making trusted adults and community awareness critical.

On Saturday, Feb. 28, the “Love Smart: Navigating Teen Relationships Safely” workshop will be held at the Harriet Elizabeth Brown Community Center at 901 Dares

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Beach Road in Prince Frederick, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register for the event at [this link](#).

For more resources, visit [LovelsRespect.org](#) or [Hope4Calvert.org](#). In an emergency, call 911. Teens can call or text 988 for confidential support.

Find information on Calvert County Government services online at [www.CalvertCountyMd.gov](#). Stay connected with Calvert County Government through the mobile app, newsletters, social media and more at [www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/StayInformed](#).

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