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## Independence House Focusing on Teen Dating Violence

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HYANNIS – In recognition of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, Independence House is looking to shed light on the issue with surveys targeted at both older high schoolers as well as middle school teens.

The two online surveys distributed from the organizations’s Nicholas G. Xiarhos Respectful Youth Relationship Program will provide more information about how students think about healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Director of Prevention, Education and Outreach for Independence House Chris Morin is hoping that the surveys also serve as a call-to-action and a way to make more progress in creating a safe and respectful environment for the area’s youth.

“Hopefully we can bring some information back to the schools if there’s some red flags about it,” Morin said.

“But, it’s also just for the students to be aware of this issue and participate, and be part of it.”

The middle school survey aligns with the “RESPECTfully” campaign, created by the Governor’s Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence.

“I think it all ties together to being good role models and working with government to do the right thing,” said former Yarmouth Deputy Police Chief Stephen Xiarhos, who is also an advocate for Independence House.

The surveys, now being used for the second straight year, are confidential. Last year, according to Morin, 162 high school students gave their thoughts on the matter.

Morin said a considerable number of students—nearly 45%—said that they or someone that they know have been involved in dating or domestic violence.

Morin said the overall goal of protecting this current generation is vital.

The first 100 students to complete the survey will receive a \$5 gift card to Dunkin’ Donuts. All students who complete the survey will also be entered into a drawing where Visa gift cards worth \$75, \$100, and \$250 will be given out to those who participate.

The three schools with the most amount of students who completed the surveys will receive a banner honoring their commitment to the goal.

Independence House is a resource, counseling, and advocacy center focused on preventing domestic and sexual violence.

For more information, visit [www.independencehouse.org](http://www.independencehouse.org).

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### About Brendan Fitzpatrick

Brendan, a recent graduate from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is one of the newest members of the CapeCod.com NewsCenter team. When not on the beat, you’ll probably find him watching Boston sports.

### CAPECOD.COM POLL QUESTION

The coronavirus has made its way to the Cape recently and businesses and schools are taking precautions to prevent the spread of the virus. How prepared are you to stay at home for potentially a longer period of time? \*

- About a month
- I’m prepared for the long haul
- A few days
- A couple of weeks
- A week or so

[View results](#)

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