

START STRONG: BUILDING HEALTHY TEEN RELATIONSHIPS INITIATIVE FACT SHEET

Start Strong is the largest national initiative ever funded targeting 11- 14- years-olds to prevent teen dating violence and abuse. Start Strong will rally entire communities in a public health effort, including teens, parents, caregivers, educators, and community leaders to build environments that support healthy relationships and ensure violence and abuse are never tolerated.

The Start Strong model combines and expands innovative strategies in education, policy change, community outreach and cutting-edge social marketing campaigns to empower teens to develop healthier relationships throughout their lives. As part of this four-year initiative, Start Strong is creating a national learning community to promote outstanding practices in prevention and advance the way our society addresses teen dating violence and abuse.

Start Strong is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in collaboration with the Family Violence Prevention Fund. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Blue Shield of California Foundation* are investing \$18 million in 11 communities across the country to identify and evaluate the most promising pathways to stop dating violence and abuse before it starts.

(*Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is funding ten sites around the country and Blue Shield of California Foundation is funding one site in California.)

Grantees

Based on a rigorous evaluation of more than 500 proposals received, the following are the selected grantees that are receiving funding for Start Strong.

1. Boston Public Health Commission - Boston, Massachusetts
2. Bronx –Lebanon Hospital - Bronx, New York
3. Catholic Charities Inc. - Wichita, Kansas
4. Clarian Health - Indianapolis, Indiana
5. Emory University School of Medicine - Atlanta, Georgia
6. Family Violence Law Center - Oakland, California
7. Idaho Coalition against Sexual and Domestic Violence - Boise, Idaho
8. Peace Over Violence – Los Angeles, California * (BSCF funded sitte)
9. RYASAP - Bridgeport, Connecticut
10. SafePlace – Austin, Texas
11. Sojourner House - Providence, Rhode Island



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Grant information

Each grant award is up to \$250,000 per year, with a maximum award of \$1 million for the full grant period (48 months starting November 15, 2008).

Family Violence Prevention Fund

The Family Violence Prevention Fund, one of the nation's leading organizations working to prevent domestic and sexual violence, is RWJF's National Program Office (NPO) for the Start Strong initiative and will provide direction and assistance to the sites. In collaboration with RWJF, the Family Violence Prevention Fund will work closely with the sites and the national evaluation team to create a menu of best program practices that can be tailored to local needs.

School-based Curriculum

Safe Dates and Fourth R are the two comprehensive prevention curriculums that have been selected to be implemented in middle schools working with the grantee sites as part of RWJF's school-based efforts. These curricula contain multiple sections and lessons on healthy relationships and have been tested in middle and high schools across the country. Both curricula are all-inclusive programs that relate to RWJF's target audience (11-14 year old youth) by using current issues that teens are facing such as media violence and cyber-bullying. Through previous evaluation, Safe Dates and Fourth R have been the most effective, having reduced violence and abuse among female and male students.