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Summary: Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/05/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3036_20241205.docx)

A bill

TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING ARTICLE 9 TO CHAPTER 25, TITLE 16 SO AS TO ENACT THE “TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT,” TO DEFINE NECESSARY TERMS, CREATE THE OFFENSE OF TEEN DATING VIOLENCE, PROVIDE A PENALTY, ALLOW VICTIMS TO SEEK ORDERS OF PROTECTION OR RESTRAINING ORDERS UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, AND PROHIBIT A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THE PROVISIONS OF THE SECTION FROM PARTICIPATING IN A PRETRIAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM; TO AMEND SECTION 59‑32‑10, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS FOR PURPOSES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION ACT, SO AS TO DEFINE THE TERM “TEEN DATING VIOLENCE”; AND TO AMEND SECTIONS 59‑32‑20, 59‑32‑30, AND 59‑32‑50, ALL RELATING TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION ACT, ALL SO AS TO REQUIRE THE INCLUSION OF TEEN DATING VIOLENCE EDUCATION IN THE COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 25, Title 16 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

Article 9

Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act

 Section 16‑25‑910. This act may be cited as the “Teen Dating Violence Prevention Act.”

 Section 16‑25‑920. (A) For purposes of this article, the term:

 (1) “Teen dating violence” means physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence between persons, whether heterosexual or same gender, eighteen years of age or younger within a dating relationship.

 (2) “Violence” means any assault, aggravated assault, battery, aggravated battery, sexual assault or battery or criminal sexual conduct offense, stalking, harassment or kidnapping resulting in the victim having reasonable cause to believe that the victim is in imminent danger of becoming the subject of an act of violence, or threats or attempts to abuse the victim, or physical injury or death to the victim.

 (B) A person commits the offense of teen dating violence when the victim has reasonable cause to believe that the victim is in imminent danger of becoming the subject of an act of teen dating violence or when a victim presents sufficient evidence that the current or former partner of the dating relationship threatened to, attempted to, or actually physically abused the victim.

 (C) A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of the offense of teen dating violence and must be punished, upon conviction, pursuant to the provisions of Section 16 25 20(B). A violation of the provisions of this section is not considered a lesser included offense of one of the offenses listed in subsection (A)(2). The penalties provided in this section are in addition to the penalties provided for an underlying offense and any sentence imposed pursuant to the provisions of the section must be served consecutively to a sentence imposed for an underlying offense.

 (D) A victim, sixteen years of age or older, of a violation of this section may seek an order of protection pursuant to the provisions of Article 1, Chapter 4, Title 20 in the family court or a restraining order in magistrates court pursuant to the provisions of Article 17, Chapter 3, Title 16, without parental or guardian consent; however, the parent or guardian of the victim must be notified by the appropriate court within twenty four hours of the issuance of the order of protection or restraining order. Victims of violations of this section under sixteen years of age must have parental or guardian consent to seek an order of protection or restraining order pursuant to the provisions of this section.

 (E) In addition, a person who is convicted of a violation of this section is not eligible to participate in a pretrial intervention program pursuant to Article 1, Chapter 22, Title 17.

SECTION 2. Section 59‑32‑10 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

 (8) “Teen dating violence” means as defined in Section 16‑25‑920.

SECTION 3. Section 59‑32‑20(A) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 (A) Before August 1, 1988, theThe board, through the department, shall select or develop an instructional unit with separate components addressing the subjects of reproductive health education, family life education, pregnancy prevention education, and sexually transmitted diseases, and teen dating violence education and make the instructional unit available to local school districts. The board, through the department, also shall make available information about other programs developed by other states upon request of a local school district.

SECTION 4. Section 59‑32‑30 (A) and (B) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 (A) Pursuant to guidelines developed by the board, each local school board shall implement the following program of instruction:

 (1) Beginning with the 1988‑89 school year, forFor grades kindergarten through five, instruction in comprehensive health education must include the following subjects: community health, consumer health, environmental health, growth and development, nutritional health, personal health, prevention and control of diseases and disorders, safety and accident prevention, substance use and abuse, dental health, and mental and emotional health. Sexually transmitted diseases as defined in the annual Department of Health and Environmental Control List of Reportable Diseases are to be excluded from instruction on the prevention and control of diseases and disorders. At the discretion of the local board, age‑appropriate instruction in reproductive health may be included.

 (2) Beginning with the 1988‑1989 school year, forFor grades six through eight, instruction in comprehensive health must include the following subjects: community health, consumer health, environmental health, growth and development, nutritional health, personal health, prevention and control of diseases and disorders, safety and accident prevention, substance use and abuse, dental health, mental and emotional health, and reproductive health education, and teen dating violence education. Sexually transmitted diseases are to be included as a part of instruction. At the discretion of the local board, instruction in family life education or pregnancy prevention education or both may be included, but instruction in these subjects may not include an explanation of the methods of contraception before the sixth grade. Beginning with the 2016‑2017 school year, for grades six through eight, instruction in comprehensive health education also must include the subject of domestic violence.

 (3) Beginning with the 1989‑90 school year, atAt least one time during the four years of grades nine through twelve, each student shall receive instruction in comprehensive health education, including at least seven hundred fifty minutes of reproductive health education, and pregnancy prevention education, and teen dating violence education.

 (4) The South Carolina Educational Television Commission shall work with the department in developing instructional programs and materials that may be available to the school districts. Films and other materials may be designed for the purpose of explaining bodily functions or the human reproductive process. These materials may not contain actual or simulated portrayals of sexual activities or sexual intercourse.

 (5) The program of instruction provided for in this section may not include a discussion of alternate sexual lifestyles from heterosexual relationships including, but not limited to, homosexual relationships except in the context of instruction concerning sexually transmitted diseases or teen dating violence.

 (6) In grades nine through twelve, students must also be given appropriate instruction that adoption is a positive alternative.

 (7) At least one time during the entire four years of grades nine through twelve, each student shall receive instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), which must include, but not be limited to, hands‑only CPR and must include awareness in the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). Each school district shall use a program that incorporates the instruction of the psychomotor skills necessary to perform CPR developed by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, or an instructional program that is nationally recognized and based on the most current national evidence‑based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for CPR and awareness in the use of an AED. Local and statewide school districts shall coordinate with entities that have the experience and necessary equipment for the instruction of CPR and awareness in the use of AEDs; provided, however, that virtual schools may administer the instruction virtually and are exempt from any in‑person instructional requirements. A school district must adopt a policy providing a waiver for this requirement for a student absent on the day the instruction occurred, a student with a disability whose individualized education program indicates such student is unable to complete all or a portion of the hands‑only CPR requirement, or a student whose parent or guardian completes, in writing, a form approved by the school district opting out of hands‑only CPR instruction and AED awareness. The State Board of Education shall incorporate CPR training and AED awareness into the South Carolina Health and Safety Education Curriculum Standards and promulgate regulations to implement this section.

 (B) Local school boards may use the instructional unit made available by the board pursuant to Section 59‑32‑20, or local boards may develop or select their own instructional materials addressing the subjects of reproductive health education, family life education, and pregnancy prevention education, and teen dating violence education. To assist in the selection of components and curriculum materials, each local school board shall appoint a thirteen‑member local advisory committee consisting of two parents, three clergy, two health professionals, two teachers, two students, one being the president of the student body of a high school, and two other persons not employed by the local school district.

SECTION 5. Section 59‑32‑50 of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 Section 59‑32‑50. (A) Pursuant to policies and guidelines adopted by the local school board, public school principals shall develop a method of notifying parents of students in the relevant grades of the content of the instructional materials concerning reproductive health, family life, pregnancy prevention, teen dating violence, and of their option to exempt their child from this instruction, and sexually transmitted diseases if instruction in the diseases is presented as a separate component. Notice must be provided sufficiently in advance of a student’s enrollment in courses using these instructional materials to allow parents and legal guardians the opportunity to preview the materials and exempt their children.

 (B) A public school principal, upon receipt of a statement signed by a student’s parent or legal guardian stating that participation by the student in the health education program conflicts with the family’s beliefs, shall exempt that student from any portion or all of the units on reproductive health, family life, and pregnancy prevention, and teen dating violence where any conflicts occur. No student must be penalized as a result of an exemption. School districts shall use procedures to ensure that students exempted from the program by their parents or guardians are not embarrassed by the exemption.

SECTION 6. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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