



**24 - Hour Hotline  
1-800-245-4580**

## **A Mother's Advice**

*...three of my children are women now; and sadly each has experienced a growing common reality – dating violence. If I had know then what I know now, I would have sat them down at the beginning of their teen years and told them:*

*"You are precious people. You are loving and caring, and no one has the right to take advantage of that. As you begin to dance the steps of dating, you will meet so many different people – some will recognize the gifts you bring, some will not be able to see you as an individual but only as a means to achieve their ends. It can be hard to tell them apart, sometimes. Even those of us who are older and wise don't see the danger signs. But here are a few things that may help:*

*Never let anyone own you or your body. It was created for you. It is perfect just as it is. You don't need to make anyone else happy with it but you. Wear what you want. Sculpture it, color it, and dress it as you choose; it is your expression of your inner self to the world. It will tell all of us what you want us to hear. And slavery is illegal.*

*Never let anyone blame you for their own troubles. You cannot control how someone decides to feel about anything, and they can't control you. You decide to be angry, sad, or joyous. That blame is a sign that they are not able to take responsibility for themselves, and that means you cannot count on them.*

*Never let anyone tell you that you are ready for something you are not yet comfortable with doing. You have an inner voice that knows you so well. It is the voice of self-love, and it will always have your best interest at heart. Trust yourself to know that you are able to think for yourself. With advice from those who love you most, you will make your own decisions.*

*Never accept violence (spoken or actioned) as forgivable. It is not. There is no excuse for using abuse as a way of saying "I love you". It is not love. It is a lack of respect and consideration for who you are.*

*And most important of all, if you are ever scared, hurt, or confused, come to me. I love you unconditionally. I will never blame you. I will believe you. And I will always take you seriously. I am your mother, and I will honor you forever."*

*-Jan Dymond*

This project was supported by Grant 2001-DW-BX-0006 awarded by the Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, and U.S. Dept. of Justice. Point of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the

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Reprinted by the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc.

Indiana State Medical Association



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