



WHEREAS, Teen dating violence, also known as dating abuse, is a serious and growing problem throughout California; and

WHEREAS, Each year, an estimated 1 in 12 high school students is physically hurt on purpose by a dating partner, and 1 in 3 adolescents report verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual dating abuse each year; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 11 female teens & 1 in 15 male teens reported experiencing physical violence in the last year; and

WHEREAS, organizations such as Human Options are igniting social change by educating Orange County to recognize relationship violence as an issue that threatens everyone, advocating for those affected by abuse, extending a safe place for victims, and empowering survivors on their journey of healing; and

WHEREAS, the theme for Human Options February campaign is “**#HEALTHYLOVE, The New Normal,**” and all those participating are encouraged to wear orange to raise awareness about dating violence; and

WHEREAS, Teen dating violence intervention and prevention programs can help to ensure a positive school climate and safe learning environment for all youth ages 12 to 24; and

WHEREAS, Education and outreach programs to community members address warning signs of teen dating violence among youth before behaviors escalate and protect the safety of targeted youth; and

WHEREAS, multiple strategies are required, such as teaching safe and healthy relationship skills, engaging influential adults and peers, disrupting the developmental pathways toward partner violence, creating protective environments, strengthening economic support for families, and supporting survivors to increase safety and lessen harm; and

WHEREAS, Teen dating violence has been linked to other forms of violence and aggression against peers, including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and physical violence; and

WHEREAS, Survivors of teen dating violence have increased risk for truancy, dropout, teen pregnancy, suicide, having eating disorders, and engaging in other harmful behaviors such as the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; and

WHEREAS, the City of Costa Mesa is committed to engaging teens and adults to promote social norms that support healthy relationships to transform our communities and ensure everyone has access to the tools to intervene when they witness teen dating violence.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John B Stephens, Mayor of the City of Costa Mesa, do hereby proclaim February 2023 as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. I encourage community leaders to empower and educate teens to develop healthy and violence-free relationships throughout their lives, raise awareness about the dynamics of teen dating violence, and support youth in learning the skills to have safe and healthy relationships.

Dated this 21st day of February 2023.

John B. Stephens, Mayor of the City of Costa Mesa