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Peace Over Violence Conference in L.A. Focuses on
"Violence-Free Teens: Building Healthy Relationships"

Experts to Demonstrate New, Youth-Driven Prevention Website www.youthoverviolence.org

LOS ANGELES (Nov. 17, 2008)—Peace Over Violence (POV) today hosted an important conference to raise awareness about teen dating and sexual violence. More than 100 youth service providers, educators and youth advocates attended.

At the event, experts from POV provided training on innovative prevention methods and discussed new ways of thinking about teen dating and sexual violence prevention. POV also presented an overview of its nationally recognized "In Touch with Teens" curriculum for 2008, and demonstrated its new, youth-driven violence prevention website, www.youthoverviolence.org.

"By using the Internet in a new and impactful way, we are empowering teens to speak out and prevent violence in their own communities," said Patti Giggans, POV Executive Director.

Entitled "Violence-Free Teens: Building Health Relationships," the one-day conference featured sessions on gangs and teen dating violence, gender-specific violence prevention programs, and how schools can respond to, and prevent, violence.

"Teen dating and sexual violence prevention is finally being recognized as the missing link in preventing violence in our relationships, homes, schools and communities," Giggans said. "This conference provided in-depth information and training, while also giving attendees the opportunity to network round these issues.

Leah Aldridge, a teen violence prevention expert, delivered the conference keynote address, providing some history and background on POV's In Touch with Teens curriculum.

"In Touch with Teens empowers youth to have healthy relationships by providing information about power and control, elements of healthy relationships and healthy sexuality, and media literacy as well as education on sexual harassment, sexual assault, and dating violence," Aldridge explained.

The In Touch With Teens curriculum was selected as one of five model youth-violence prevention programs in the United States (and the only such program from California) by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It was also selected as the relationship-violence curriculum for the 'Life Skills for the 21st Century' curriculum of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

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Also at the conference, Dr. Lori Vollandt of LAUSD, addressed instituting policy changes in schools around teen dating violence prevention, and a panel of teens provided accounts of their experiences with violence.

Attendees were introduced to youthoverviolence.org website. Established earlier this year, the site features Peace Over Violence's youth dating and sexual violence prevention curriculums, including:

- Be Strong: empowerment curriculum for at-risk girls.
- My Strength: a national curriculum that targets boys to become allies in violence prevention.
- In Touch With Teens: dating and sexual violence prevention for middle and high school students.
- Students Together Organizing Peace: Student-organized clubs that focus on campus-specific peace projects.
- Peer 2 Peer: peer counseling curriculum for high school students.

[Youthoverviolence.org](http://youthoverviolence.org) includes opinion polls with real-time results, digital stories, photos, poetry, and art created by teens from Peace Over Violence's prevention programs. Joining the website's email/ mailing list allows members to receive updates, invitations to special events, and POV newsletters.

Formerly known as the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women, Peace Over Violence is a social service agency dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence. For more information, visit www.peaceoverviolence.org.

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