



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruth Hassell-Thompson

Senator Hassell-Thompson Says "It's Time To Talk"

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON December 3, 2009

| ISSUE: **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

| COMMITTEE: **CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME AND CORRECTION**

On December 3, 2009 Americans nationwide will be participating in *It's Time To Talk Day*, a day dedicated to speaking about issues that are literally life and death ----domestic abuse and teen dating abuse. Here's an alarming statistic: 1 in 2 teens report that they have been personally victimized by controlling behaviors from a boyfriend or girlfriend. Many are afraid to speak out due to fear and stigma. This is why Liz Claiborne Inc. has chosen to sponsor *It's Time To Talk Day*, in order to provide a national platform to discuss these issues in the open.

As Chairwoman of the New York State Senate Task Force on Domestic Violence, Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson works closely with the National Foundation for Women Legislators and MADE (Moms and Dads for Education) to ensure that all young people are educated about the devastating consequences of teen dating violence and abuse.

MADE is a nationwide coalition of parents, teachers and concerned citizens who advocate for every middle school and high school in the country to teach curricula on teen dating violence and abuse. This year they are participating in *It's Time To Talk Day* by urging all schools to teach the nationally-recognized **Love is Not Abuse** curriculum. Due to the increasing digital age we live in, nearly 1 in 3 teens in a relationship say their partners have used texting to control and harass them at all hours of the night. The **Love is Not Abuse** curriculum is being officially re-launched on December 3rd with a new section on digital abuse.

Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson urges all parents, teachers and concerned community members to take a few moments and speak to the teens in their lives about relationship violence. Dating violence among youth has reached epidemic proportions, tragically resulting in thousands of potentially preventable deaths.

“We must teach our youth that violence is NEVER acceptable in any type of relationship. Neither is exerting undue control or pressure, whether it be verbal, physical or in a mixed media setting,” said Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson. “I commend MADE and Liz Claiborne for their work in creating awareness and safe situations where our youth can come together and learn.”