

## **VIOLENT GANG RAPE STIRS DISCUSSION AMONG AUSTIN GIRL'S GROUP**

A 15-year-old girl was assaulted and gang-raped for 2 ½ hours last week outside a school building where a homecoming dance was being held in Richmond, CA. It is reported that as many as 10 people were involved in the continuous rape and beating of the victim while over 10 bystanders watched the crime take place, according to CNN.com. Instead of putting a stop to the activity or calling the police the on-lookers took pictures, texted others and tweeted about the crime. Has social media made violence a joke? At GENaustin's Girls Now! Conference on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, girls and parents will have a safe place to discuss the issues of dating violence, bullying, healthy relationships and more.

Dating violence is, unfortunately, a common occurrence in adolescent teen relationships. Often time teens are found in unhealthy relationships where fear keeps them from speaking out about their situation or even a friend's situation.

Here are the statistics:

- 1 in 11 adolescents reports being a victim of physical dating violence (CDC 2006)
- 31% of adolescents report having at least one friend who is in a violent relationship (Arriaga and Foshee 2004)
- Victims of dating violence are not only at increased risk for injury, they are also more likely to engage in binge drinking, suicide attempts, physical fights, and currently sexual activity (CDC 2006)
- Adolescents in abusive relationships often carry these unhealthy patterns of violence into future relationships (Smith et al. 2003)
- Acceptance of dating violence among friends is one of the strongest links to future involvement in dating violence (Bergman 1992; Arriaga and Foshee 2004)

To help change the nature of unhealthy teen relationships, GENaustin's Girls Now! Conference will be addressing these vital issues in interactive workshops that will connect parents, teachers, and girls (grades 5 - 12) who have questions with resources and experts who have answers.

The conference will take place at The Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, from 8 AM -5 PM. Register today at [www.genaustin.org](http://www.genaustin.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **About GENaustin**

GENaustin (The Girls Empowerment Network of Austin) fosters healthy self-esteem in girls by engaging them to explore and define their personal values and build skills that empower them with confidence and courage to make wise choices. For more information about GENaustin, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization visit [www.genaustin.org](http://www.genaustin.org)

### About GENaustin's Girls NOW! Conference

The Conference is a one-day seminar, designed for girls grades 5-12, their parents and educators to explore the issues of Bullying, Body Image and Being a Girl through group presentations and hands-on interactive sessions led by nationally recognized experts that are designed to identify the problems and offer solutions. Visit [www.genaustin.org](http://www.genaustin.org)