



## **WASHTENAW COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF Domestic Violence Prevention Education and Professional Training in Public Schools**

*Passed by the WCDP General Membership on April 25, 2022*

**WHEREAS**, domestic violence may consist of physical, mental, verbal, financial, sexual, and/or litigation abuse designed to create a system of power and control over the victim, *and*

**WHEREAS**, domestic violence is a chronic and worsening public health crisis, irreparably harming millions people every year, and costing billions of dollars in physical and mental health care, property damage, lost wages, incarceration, and court expenses, *and*

**WHEREAS**, domestic violence is the leading cause of injury and homicide in women in the United States, and trends suggest that at least 2,300 U.S. women will be murdered by their intimate partners in 2022, *and*

**WHEREAS**, children who witness domestic violence are at grave risk for a variety of severe lifelong negative outcomes including depression, suicidality, substance abuse, cardiovascular disease, and anxiety and other mental health disorders, and are at a much higher risk of becoming abusive or victims of abuse themselves, *and*

**WHEREAS**, over 1,700 instances of domestic violence were reported in Washtenaw County in 2021, a figure that excludes Ypsilanti Township misdemeanors, known to exceed 500 in that same period, *and*

**WHEREAS**, school personnel, who see children more often than any adults other than their caregivers, are critical frontline workers in the detection and intervention in domestic violence, *and*

**WHEREAS**, 1 in 3 teenagers in the United States will experience dating violence, nearly 1.5 million high school students experience physical abuse by a dating partner every year in the United States, young women ages 16-24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence, young African American women experience domestic violence at almost triple the national average, 80% of girls who have been physically abused in their relationship continue to date their abuser, and 46% of teens who have known a victim of dating abuse did not intervene or know what to do if they saw abuse happening, *and*

**WHEREAS**, there is no systemic funding in Michigan for prevention programs targeting teens and young adults, even though early prevention programs have been shown to be highly effective in raising awareness of the signs of domestic and dating violence and of ways to offer help, *and*

**WHEREAS**, most public school personnel in Washtenaw County are not trained in what to look for or how to support children suffering from the effects of domestic violence. There is no funding, training or systematic policy guidance for public school staff to support children dealing with Adverse Childhood Experiences, relating to domestic violence,



**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Washtenaw County Democratic Party calls on local, county, and state school boards, county and state legislators, and policymakers to fund and implement well-tested, effective domestic and dating violence prevention programs in middle and high schools as a routine and required part of the curriculum.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Washtenaw County Democratic Party calls on school boards to support and fund training to all staff in recognition of signs of domestic violence/child abuse and other adverse childhood experiences<sup>1</sup> (ACEs) in our students. Training and future protocols should work in conjunction with the local Handle with Care Program.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.washtenawisd.org/HandleWithCare>