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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Texas Advocacy Project Announces 2026 Teen Ambassadors of Hope Program to Prevent Dating Violence

(DALLAS headline: New Texas Data Shows Violence Starts Young; Texas Advocacy Project Expands Teen Leadership Program to Dallas)

Leadership Initiative Empowers Teens to Advance Healthy Relationships, Create Advocates for Safety

(Austin, TX – January 27, 2026) – [Texas Advocacy Project](#) (TAP), a leading statewide nonprofit dedicated to ending dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, stalking, and human trafficking through free legal and social services, announced that registration is now open for the 2026 session of its **Teen Ambassadors of Hope (TAoH)** program. Now in its 12th year, TAoH will expand to the Dallas area, extending the program's reach to teens in North Texas for the first time. The leadership initiative educates and empowers teens to recognize healthy relationships, prevent dating violence, and become advocates for safety and change in their communities. New in 2026, TAP expands TAoH to the Dallas area, bringing the program and its benefits to teens in North Texas.

[A newly released statewide report](#) from TexVEX reveals that one in 10 Texans experienced intimate partner violence during adolescence (ages 13–17), and one in four report the same early onset for sexual violence. These findings highlight why early education and prevention efforts are essential, underscoring the continued importance of the TAoH program.

[Research shows](#) that unhealthy or abusive relationships during adolescence are linked to long-term impacts, including depression, anxiety, substance use, and increased risk of future victimization. "Teen Ambassadors of Hope gives teens like me and my best friends the tools to build a safer tomorrow, to teach our friends about their relationship rights, and to be part of a movement creating a safer future for all of us," said Sydney Prewitt, a TAoH Alumni.

How it works:

[TAoH](#) unites Texas teens ages 13–19 for a half-day, in-person training followed by two weeks of peer-to-peer fundraising and awareness efforts. Through interactive workshops on healthy relationships, leadership development, and civic engagement, Ambassadors gain practical tools to educate peers, support friends in difficult situations, and raise awareness about TAP's free legal and social services.

Since its launch in 2015, TAoH has trained 634 teens across Austin, with more than 800 adults involved through nominations and parental or guardian participation. The program delivers true impact: in a survey following the 2025 cohort, 100% of survey participants reported feeling more confident identifying healthy versus unhealthy relationships and helping a friend or family member, and 100% said they would recommend the program to their peers.

In addition to education and advocacy training, TAoH offers leadership development, volunteer service hours, networking with peers across Texas, and a letter of recommendation from TAP CEO Heather Bellino, supporting college and job applications.

Call to Action:

TAP encourages teens, parents, educators, and community leaders to learn more about TAoH and get involved. Teens interested in becoming an Ambassador, or adults looking to nominate a teen, can find program details, eligibility requirements, and application information by visiting texasadvocacyproject.org/TAoH. The **deadline to register for the 2026 program is March 12**.

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About Texas Advocacy Project:

Established in 1982 as a legal hotline, Texas Advocacy Project (TAP) has evolved into an expert on legal and social issues affecting survivors of power-based abuse. TAP works to end dating and domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, stalking, and human trafficking in Texas. TAP empowers survivors through free legal and social services, as well as access to the justice system, and raises awareness through public outreach and education. Our attorneys, staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors are dedicated to our vision of a future where all Texans live free from abuse. In 2025, TAP helped 14,042 clients and their children through our free legal and social services. If you or someone you know needs help, call 800-374-HOPE or visit TexasAdvocacyProject.org.