



**For Immediate Release**

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**THE WELLER HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER CONTINUES ITS OUTREACH TO REDUCE AND PREVENT DATING VIOLENCE AMONG TEENS IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

**EASTON, PA (September 28, 2009)** – Through a grant from Verizon Foundation, the Weller Health Education Center will seek to identify the perceptions on dating violence from teens in Monroe, Carbon, Pike and Wayne counties in Pennsylvania and provide programming to reduce and prevent these violent behaviors.

The first phase will be to identify, through the use of focus groups and online surveys, how middle school students perceive dating or domestic violence, what influences their perception and how technology has an impact on dating violence behaviors. Doctoral researchers at Lehigh University's Social Science Data Center will cull the information from these focus groups to build the 20-question diagnostic online survey tool.

With the data from these student surveys, the Weller Center will develop a new, outcomes-based dating violence prevention workshop for students in these counties which will seek to provide vital information to these students before the onset of these behaviors. This second phase consists of two hour-long workshops focusing on the components of a healthy and an unhealthy relationship including how to break the cycle of violence.

Pocono Mountain School District's sixth and seventh grade students will participate in the student focus groups and the online survey this fall. In the spring, the same students will take part in the two hour-long violence prevention workshops delivered by the Weller Center.

"Verizon is proud to improve the quality of life for youth and families in Northeastern Pennsylvania by empowering the community with innovative tools and resources," said Daniel J. Reavy, Director of External Affairs for Verizon Pennsylvania. "We're investing in programs, such as our partnership with the Weller Health Education Center, to reach every type of learner across the lifespan and to touch people's lives by focusing on education, health and family safety in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We understand that education does not begin or end in the classroom. Visit [www.thinkfinity.org](http://www.thinkfinity.org) to learn more."

**A press conference offering additional details about this partnership will be held at Clear Run Intermediate School at 3600 Memorial Boulevard, Tobyhanna, PA Wednesday, September 30 at 10:00 a.m.**

Verizon Foundation

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, supports the advancement of literacy and K-12 education through its free educational Web site, Thinkfinity.org, and fosters awareness and prevention of domestic violence. Through Verizon Volunteers, one of the nation's largest employee volunteer programs, Verizon employees and retirees have volunteered more than 3 million hours of community service since 2000. For more information on the foundation, visit [www.verizonfoundation.org](http://www.verizonfoundation.org).

## **Weller Health Education Center**



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### The Weller Health Education Center

The mission of the Weller Health Education Center is to measurably improve children's lives by giving students the tools they need to make informed and healthy life choices. Each year the Center partners with more than 500 schools to supplement and enhance the teaching of health, character education and life science for students grades K through 12. The Weller Health Education Center was the first not-for-profit health promotion, disease prevention education facility of its kind in Pennsylvania. Serving more than 1.3 million children since our inception in 1982, the Weller Center remains the only such center in our 39-county service area and one of just 34 health education centers across the nation.

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