

# The Dibble Fund

## Press Release

Contact: Kay Reed  
510-528-7975  
KayReed@DibbleFund.org

### Love Is In The Air! Paying Attention to the Romantic Lives of Teens

Teens today live and breathe in a culture that touts casual sex and casual connections, yet the romantic lives of teens are often ignored in youth programming. The adolescent years are a time when “habits of the heart” are first formed and when half of first out-of-wedlock births occur. Our conversations with teens should be about more than avoiding STD’s or pregnancy – we also need to discuss the context in which sex happens, namely relationships.

Romantic mistakes in the teen years can derail future successes in education, employment and parenting. Young people need and want help cultivating a “North Star” – that is, a long-range vision for quality relationships, along with the practical knowledge and skills needed to build them.

Current empirical research clearly shows that relationship skills curricula positively impact some of today’s most urgent social problems. Such programs can:

- Significantly reduce the onset of sexual activity by increasing self-awareness and self-discipline, as well as the ability to delay gratification and develop long-term goals.
- Decrease peer-to-peer physical violence and improve communications with parents.
- Improve students’ ability to resist sexual pressure and decrease negative behaviors at home and at school.
- Show promise in reducing dating violence and abuse.

The good news is that best practices, age appropriate, research based and evaluated curricula are available and can be easily taught (check out [www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org](http://www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org)).

These programs offer guidance on navigating the world of young adult relationships in the following ways:

- Issues like attraction, infatuation, rejection, falling in love, emotions, dating, breaking up and dealing with a broken heart are covered.
- Attention is paid to what to say and what to do in the early stages of going out and the “how-tos” – that is, how to really get to know someone, how to build a relationship, how to assess a relationship, and how to avoid attachment to problem people.
- There are suggestions about “smart dating,” a low-risk dating strategy, and guidelines for assessing the health of their relationships.
- Lessons explore the concepts of peer pressure and maturity, and help participants identify personal values as well as, identify the characteristics they find attractive in a potential friend or boy/girlfriend.

Details about programs, current research and training are available from the Dibble Fund. Look over the FREE SAMPLE LESSONS online ([www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org](http://www.BuildingRelationshipSkills.org)) or call 1-800-695-7975 to learn more about one of the greatest Valentines we can offer our teens – the skills needed to create healthy romantic relationships now and in the future.