



# *Proclamation*

- WHEREAS,** The City of Merced is committed to the well-being and protection of our youth, the safety of our communities, and to fostering a society based upon respect for one another, and where violence has no role; teen dating violence, and its various forms of control and abuse, is a serious crime that can continue into adulthood, with the potential to destroy lives; and
- WHEREAS,** dating violence can have a negative effect on health throughout life, as teens who are victims are more likely to be depressed, have eating disorders, do poorly in school, engage in unhealthy behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, and think about or attempt suicide; sadly for a number of today's teenagers, dating violence is a reality, and many parents and guardians are unaware that their teenager son, daughter, or child within their care is a victim; and
- WHEREAS,** national studies on this issue indicate that approximately 1 in 3 adolescent girls experience some form of interpersonal violence; nearly 1 in 10 teens report they were intentionally hit, slapped, or physically hurt by their boyfriend or girlfriend, 62% of young teens -ages 11 to 14 years- report knowing friends who have been in verbally abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend; and
- WHEREAS,** California has focused on the teen dating violence issues through effective measures and action, including a teen-focused dating abuse and healthy relationship website, a social media initiative, and public awareness campaign such as [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org); and
- WHEREAS,** both houses of the U.S congress have declared February as "National Teen Dating Awareness and Prevention Month".

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, STANLEY P. THURSTON, Mayor** of the City of Merced, do hereby proclaim the month of February, TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH in the City of Merced and encourage youth, families, schools, law enforcement, communities, government agencies, elected officials, and civic organizations to promote public awareness of teen dating violence.

Signed this 16<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016.

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*Stanley P. Thurston, Mayor of Merced*