

**TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH, February 2020
A PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, teens between the ages 16-24 are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence, experiencing abuse at a rate almost triple the national average; and

WHEREAS, one in three girls and one in four boys in the United States are victims of physical, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting youth; and

WHEREAS, high school students who experience physical violence in a dating relationship are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, are at greater risk of suicide and are much more likely to carry patterns of abuse into future relationships; and

WHEREAS, nearly half of teens who experience dating violence report that incidents of abuse took place in a school building or on school grounds; and

WHEREAS, only 33% of teens who are in an abusive relationship ever tell anyone about the abuse, and 81% of parents surveyed either believe teen dating violence is not an issue or admit they do not have knowledge of it; and

WHEREAS, by providing young people with education regarding healthy relationships and relationship skills and by changing attitudes and behaviors that support violence, we recognize that dating violence can be prevented; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to raise community awareness and to provide training for teachers, counselors and school staff so that they may recognize when youth are exhibiting signs of dating violence; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month will benefit young people, their families, schools and communities regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, everyone has the right to a safe and healthy relationship and to be free from abuse.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rick West, Mayor of the City of Wheatland, do hereby proclaim February 2020, Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, throughout the City of Wheatland. We urge all residents to work toward ending teen dating violence by working with Casa de Esperanza in their prevention efforts to empower young people to develop healthy relationships, assisting victims in accessing the information and supportive services they need, creating more resources for young people in need, instituting effective intervention and prevention policies in schools and engaging in discussions with family members and peers to promote awareness and prevention of the quiet epidemic of teen dating violence.

Rick West, Mayor