

Show aims to raise Quincy High students' awareness of domestic violence

One-woman play aims to raise abuse awareness among students

By Michaela Stanelun [The Patriot Ledger](#) [Original Article](#)

Posted May 01, 2008



QUINCY —

Rydia Q. Vielehr walked out onto the stage at Quincy High School on Wednesday morning wearing a blood-stained yellow prom dress, making some juniors gasp.

Vielehr is the performer in “The Yellow Dress,” a one-woman play presented at Quincy High School to foster awareness of dating violence and abusive relationships.

The play comes a little more than a week after the murder of 29-year-old Barbara Tassinari in Abington. Her husband, John Tassinari, is charged with her murder.

“This performance will get the students in tune with abuse and respecting others,” Principal Frank Santoro said, adding that he hopes students become more aware after watching the play.

Vielehr, playing “Anna,” talked to the audience about her boyfriend, “Ricky,” noting that Ricky had just broken up with her the day before her prom and was taking another girl to the dance.

As Vielehr changes from a pink prom dress to the blood-stained yellow prom dress, the audience of high school juniors learns the story of Anna and Ricky.

Ricky was a respected high school student who was well-liked by everybody, but began controlling Anna a year into their three-year relationship. He abused her physically, emotionally and mentally.

He killed her the day before her prom – after she had broken up with him.

Ricky’s reasoning? “If I can’t have you, no one else will,” Vielehr said.

“How could a guy who said he loved me do this?” Vielehr asked the hushed audience.

After the half-hour play was performed, school counselors, student mediators and Quincy Police Officer Lisa Devine talked about the issue.

Students submitted questions about the play and about abusive relationships, ranging from the signs of an abusive relationship to whether the play was based on a true story.

Although the play had an impact on students, it wasn’t until Devine spoke about domestic abuse cases that the audience was shocked.

“Domestic violence is a crime that exceeds all other violence,” Devine said, mentioning the way that Ricky picked up Anna at her house specifically to take her someplace and kill her.

“This is the one crime that takes it to an entirely other level, and that’s why the laws are so strict concerning domestic violence,” Devine said.

Sarah Dougenik, 16, said the play opened her eyes.

“I hope people took it seriously,” Sarah said. “People need to know that

this does happen.”