

## **BET Networks Tackles the Issue of Relationship Abuse with a Special '106 & Park' Live on Thursday, March 12 at 6:00 p.m. ET\***

**BET Partners with Break the Cycle, the Center Against Domestic Violence and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline to Shed Light on Relationship Abuse Amongst Teens --Guests Include Alesha Renee, Free, Kevin Powell and Relationship Experts Dr. Michelle Callahan and Dr. Jeff Gardere**

NEW YORK, March 11, 2009 -- LIVE from New York City on Thursday, March 12 at 6:00 p.m. ET\*, 106 & PARK will devote an entire episode to relationship abuse, a form of domestic violence currently affecting our teens. Sparked by recent incidents within the entertainment industry, 106 & PARK will gather a panel of experts, industry insiders, victims, perpetrators and survivors to carefully examine the impact of domestic violence among our youth and provide tips on breaking the cycle of abuse.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070716/BETNETWORKSLOGO> )

This two-hour special is not intended to explore the details surrounding recent incidents. Instead it is a forum to inform and enlighten 'tweens and teens about the dangers surrounding relationship abuse. This special episode of 106 & PARK will address the issue head-on and coach viewers on the dangers of being involved in an abusive relationship, whether it's with a parent, friend or partner. Sadly, many teens do not even know they are in an abusive relationship until it's too late.

BET's own Alesha Renee and former 106 & PARK host Free will join current 106 & PARK hosts Terrence and Rocsi and share their personal stories with our viewers. Free will grace the 106 & PARK set for the first time since her departure in 2005. Also joining the two-hour special will be community activist Kevin Powell and psychologist and relationship experts Dr. Michelle Callahan and Dr. Jeff Gardere.

"Relationship abuse has always been present with teens, but recent events have forced tough conversations," said Stephen Hill, President of Music Programming and Specials, BET Networks. "We've been VERY careful to not sensationalize this sensitive issue. BET and 106 & PARK are determined to serve our audience with careful dialogue and direction for those affected. We're especially glad that Free will be coming back to 106 & PARK for the first time to share her personal story."

Relationship abuse is a highly relevant subject affecting teens. The following compelling statistics were compiled by Break the Cycle, a non-profit organization that engages, educates and empowers youth to build lives and communities free from domestic and dating violence.

- One in three teens experiences some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships, including verbal and physical abuse.
- Nearly 80% of girls who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser.
- 40% of teen girls ages 14-17 know someone their age who has been hit or beaten by their partner.
- About one in five high school girls have been physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.

106 & PARK has partnered with several non-profit organizations for this special, including: Break the Cycle, a Washington, D.C. non-profit that empowers youth to break the cycle of domestic abuse; the Center Against Domestic Violence, a NYC-based non-profit that provides education and prevention programs promoting a society free of domestic violence and abuse; and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline, a 24-hour hotline resource accessible via phone and Internet, specifically designed to address dating abuse among teens or young adults (866-331-9474).

BET.com users can visit [www.bet.com/106andpark](http://www.bet.com/106andpark) and upload videos of their personal stories on relationship abuse or submit questions for Dr. Michelle Callahan and Dr. Jeff Gardere to answer. Questions and stories will be selected to air throughout the show on Thursday, March 12.

\*This special episode of 106 & PARK will air live at 6:00 p.m. ET and will air tape delayed for the Central, Mountain and Pacific time zones.

### **About Our Medical Experts**

Dr. Michelle R. Callahan is a relationship expert, coach, developmental psychologist, and national media favorite. She is the savvy, "tell it like it is" psychologist and life coach television audiences turn to when they are looking for straight talk on

relationships, life makeovers, mental health and empowerment. Her first book, *Ms. Typed: Discover Your True Dating Personality and Rewrite Your Romantic Future*, will publish in May 2009 from Crown Publishing.

Dr. Jeff Gardere, better known as America's Psychologist, is one of the most widely sought-after experts in the field of mental health. In addition to having a private practice in Manhattan, he has garnered a reputation as being a top motivational and keynote speaker, empowerment and media coach. Dr. Jeff has authored several books, including his controversial book, "Love Prescription." He is also the co-author of "Practical Parenting" with Montel Williams, the Emmy-award winning TV talk show host. Dr. Jeff's first book, *Smart Parenting for African-Americans: Helping Your Kids Thrive in a Difficult World* has been lauded as being "necessary for raising African-American children in today's society." (Black Issues Book Review). Dr. Jeff is also a monthly columnist for *Sister 2 Sister Magazine*.

#### About BET Networks

BET Networks, a division of Viacom Inc. (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is the nation's leading provider of quality entertainment, music, news and public affairs television programming for the African-American audience. The primary BET channel reaches more than 98 million households and can be seen in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and sub-Saharan Africa. BET is the dominant African-American consumer brand with a diverse group of businesses extensions: BET.com, a leading Internet destination for Black entertainment, music, culture, and news; BET Digital Networks -- BET J, BET Gospel and BET Hip Hop, attractive alternatives for cutting-edge entertainment tastes; BET Home Entertainment, a collection of BET-branded offerings for the home environment including DVDs and video-on-demand; BET Mobile, which provides ringtones, games and video content for wireless devices; and BET International, which operates BET in the United Kingdom and oversees the extension of BET network programming for global distribution.

#### SOURCE BET Networks

<http://www.bet.com>