



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

7th Grade



WHAT IS DATING ABUSE?

Dating abuse (or Relationship Abuse): A **pattern of controlling behavior** that someone uses against a girlfriend or a boyfriend. The core of dating abuse is **Power** and **Control**.

DEFINING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Speak Up. In a healthy relationship, if something is bothering them, it's best to talk about it instead of holding it in.

Respect Each Other. Each partner's wishes and feelings have value. Let each other know they are making an effort to keep their ideas in mind. Mutual respect is essential in maintaining healthy relationships.

Compromise. Disagreements are a natural part of healthy relationships, but it's important that they find a way to compromise if they disagree on something. They should try to solve conflicts in a fair and rational way.

Be Supportive. Offer reassurance and encouragement to each other in a relationship. Also, partners should let each other know when they need their support. Healthy relationships are about building each other up, not putting each other down.

Respect Each Other's Privacy. Just because someone is in a relationship doesn't mean they have to share everything and constantly be together.

Setting **Healthy Boundaries**

Healthy boundaries shouldn't restrict someone's ability to:

- Go out with their friends without their partner.
- Participate in activities and hobbies they like.
- Not have to share passwords to their email, social media accounts or phone.
- Respect each other's individual likes and needs.

DEFINING UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS & DATING ABUSE

Dating abuse is a pattern of destructive behaviors used to exert power and control over a dating partner. While we define dating violence as a pattern, that doesn't mean the first instance of abuse is not dating violence. It just recognizes that dating violence usually involves a series of abusive behaviors over a course of time.

Dating violence can happen to anyone, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation or background.

Drugs and alcohol can affect a person's judgment and behavior, but they do not excuse abuse or violence.

Dating violence can be:

Physical: hitting, slapping, choking, kicking

Emotional/Verbal: putting you down; embarrassing you in public (online or off); threatening you in any way; telling you what to do or what to wear

Sexual: pressuring or forcing you to do anything sexual, including sexting;

Financial: taking your paychecks; preventing you from working

Digital: sending threats via text, social media or email; stalking or humiliating you on social media; logging into your social media or email accounts without permission; forcing you to share passwords

WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Constantly putting someone down
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity
- Explosive temper
- Isolating someone from their family or friends, dictating who they can see or hang out with
- Mood swings (nice one minute and angry the next)
- Checking someone's cell phone, social media or email without permission
- Physically hurting someone in any way
- Possessiveness
- Telling someone what to do or what to wear

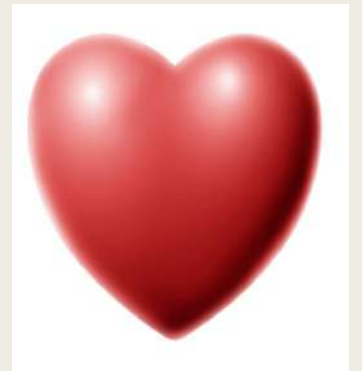
If you think you are in an unhealthy relationship, tell someone.

Support System

- Family
- School Counselor

Hotlines

- [National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline](https://www.loveisrespect.org)
Call: 1-866-331-9474 (loveisrespect.org)
- chat at [loveisrespect.org](https://www.loveisrespect.org) or text “loveis” to 22522, any time, 24/7/365.



Activity
Draw a Healthy Relationship

Scenario
Communicating Effectively