

Where To Get Help

If you are ever in an emotionally, physically or sexually abusive relationship don't be afraid to talk to others if you need help.



You may want to seek help from a trusted friend, parent, adult, counselor or crisis hotline.

You can call the number below for help or ask for a local referral list from Planned Parenthood.

RAINN Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE
(Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network)

Planned Parenthood
1-800-230-7526

Everyone deserves to be in a healthy and positive relationship that is free from peer pressure and manipulation. Read this brochure and ask yourself...

Am I In A Healthy Relationship?

Am I in a healthy relationship?

Healthy relationships are based on mutual respect and trust. Coercive or abusive relationships are based on manipulation, pressure and force and they are unhealthy. Think honestly about your relationship. Answer **"Yes"** or **"No"** to the following questions:

- Does my boyfriend/girlfriend try to tell me what to do, how to dress, who to be with?
- Do I spend most of my time worrying about our relationship?
- Does she/he ignore me or disrespect me when friends are around?
- Have I quit doing things I used to enjoy since I've become involved with this person?
- Does my boyfriend/girlfriend only act nice to me when he/she wants to have sex?
- Has my girlfriend/boyfriend ever threatened or intimidated me?
- Has my boyfriend/girlfriend ever said "I can't live without you" or threatened to hurt themselves if I try to end the relationship?
- Has my girlfriend/boyfriend ever physically harmed me?
- Does my boyfriend/girlfriend insult me, put me down or make me feel bad about myself or my body?

If you answered **"yes"** to **ANY** of the above questions you may be involved in an unhealthy and manipulative relationship.

Do any of the following types of abuse exist in your relationship?

Verbal: calls you names, threatens you, is overly critical or talks down to you.

Emotional: makes you feel like you never think, say or do anything right. Blames you for everything that goes wrong.

Physical: pushes you around or hits, kicks, slaps, or pokes you. Throws or breaks things that belong to you.

Sexual: does not respect your boundaries, does not listen when your body or mouth says NO, ignores you when you have doubts or are uncertain, and forces you to have sex when you do not want to.

If you have experienced any type of abuse, you may want to seek help from a trusted friend, parent, adult, counselor or crisis hotline.

It is unacceptable to pressure, force or exploit another person sexually.

Each person should choose freely whether to engage in any sexual behavior – whether it is kissing, sexual intercourse, touching, or hugging – without pressure.

Sexual Coercion is pressuring someone to engage in sexual activity when they do not want to. Using threats, intimidation, peer pressure, “lines” or manipulation in order to get someone to have sex is **unhealthy**. It is not always considered illegal.

Sexual Assault is forcing or threatening someone to engage in sexual activity against their will. It also includes sexual activity between adults and minors. **Sexual assault is against the law.**



Some examples of sexual assault include:

- Having sex with someone against their will
- Having sex with someone who is intoxicated or drugged
- Adults (age 18 and older) who have sex with a minor
- A parent, guardian, teacher or coach who has sex with a child or student

Dating Someone Older?

You or someone you know may be dating someone older. For some teens, it seems like an older partner has a lot to offer: a car, money and their own place. Other’s say that adults act more mature and treat them differently than someone their own age. While it is true that someone older may act differently than someone your age, they don’t always treat you better.

What’s different about dating an older person is they have a lot more power than you do. Some adults think teens are easier to control than someone their own age.

Adults usually have more sexual experience and are more likely to give a sexually transmitted infection to a younger partner. Teens in relationships with adults are also more likely to experience pregnancy than those who date someone their own age. Remember, just because someone is older, it doesn’t mean they are more responsible.

When you really think about it, you are more likely to stand up for yourself and have a more equal relationship with someone your own age.

Most importantly, you need to know if you are 15 years old or younger and the person you are having sex with is an adult, it is against the law.

An adult who has sex with a minor can be charged with sexual assault and go to jail.



Alcohol, Drugs And Sex Are A Dangerous Mix.

If you want to protect yourself and have a healthy relationship, you should know that using drugs and/or alcohol:



- Makes it harder for you to think clearly
- Reduces your ability to recognize a dangerous situation
- Reduces your ability to send clear messages
- Can reduce your ability to defend yourself from sexual assault

By law, people who are drunk or high are considered unable to give their consent to sexual activity.

The bottom line: having intercourse with an intoxicated person is a crime.

When You Want To Say “NO”

Saying no is never easy. Remember this when you want to say no:

- Think about your values and limits ahead of time and tell your partner.
- Say no as soon as possible.
- Don’t apologize for saying no—it is your decision, and your right.
- You don’t have to give a reason or justify your decision.
- You don’t have to get involved in a debate. If your partner pressures you, just keep saying no.

If your partner continues to argue or makes you feel uncomfortable, you may need to leave the situation. Always put your safety first.

You Deserve The Best, So Take Care of Yourself

In any relationship it is important to know you have the right:

- to be safe
- to set limits
- to disagree with your partner
- to leave a situation when your instincts tell you to
- to refuse sex at anytime
- to defend yourself
- to end a relationship that is not healthy
- to trust your own feelings above all else
- to report abuse in a relationship

If you need to talk with someone about your relationship, turn the page

