

Info for
PARENTS

Respect.
Teach your
kids how to
give it and
get it.

CHOOSE RESPECT

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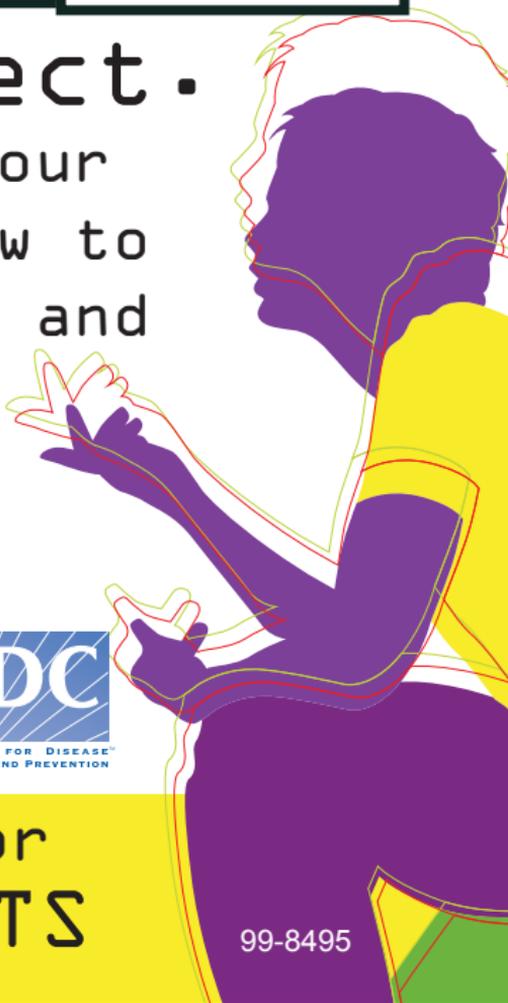


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How to Recognize the Warning Signs

Preventing dating abuse begins with awareness. Unhealthy relationships can happen to anyone, at any age, regardless of background, education, or religion.

In unhealthy relationships, the partners who are being abused may:

- Give up hobbies and other activities that they once enjoyed.
- Worry all the time about making their partners angry or jealous.
- Withdraw from friends and family.
- Spend too much of their free time with their dating partners.

The abusive partners in these unhealthy relationships may:

- Insult their partners in public.
- Try to control how their partners dress and act.
- Check in on their partners over and over again.
- Lose their temper and seem unable to control their anger.
- Threaten to do something drastic (such as commit suicide) if their partners ever try to break up with them.

Breaking the Ice

There are various ways to get your conversation started. Here are some possible questions you can ask your child.

1. What does respect mean?
2. Have you seen other kids teased for being different?
3. How do you solve problems with your friends?

Parents Are the Key to Prevention

As a parent, you are in a special position to teach your child about relationships with others. Your child will learn as much from your words as from your actions, so take every opportunity to be a role model and show your child what it means to respect himself/herself and others. Keep the lines of communication open and let your child know that he/she can come to you to talk through tough situations.

For more information, visit www.chooserrespect.org

Quiz

Does your child know what qualities are important for a healthy relationship? Take this quiz with your child and decide whether each statement is "true" or "false." Look at the correct answers at the bottom of the quiz and see how you scored.

Healthy relationships are with someone who

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. is honest. | True / False |
| 2. shares his/her feelings. | True / False |
| 3. always has to have his/her way. | True / False |
| 4. accepts you for who you are. | True / False |
| 5. listens to what you have to say. | True / False |
| 6. you like to spend time with. | True / False |
| 7. is popular with a certain crowd. | True / False |
| 8. respects you. | True / False |
| 9. tells you what to do. | True / False |
| 10. you can talk with about your feelings. | True / False |

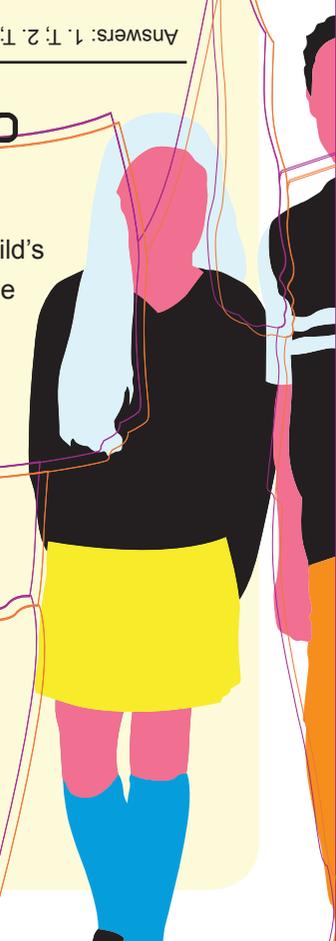
Answers: 1. T, 2. T, 3. F, 4. T, 5. T, 6. T, 7. F, 8. T, 9. F, 10. T

8 Ways for You to Stay Involved

There are hundreds of ways to stay involved in your child's life—and you don't need to do them all—but maybe some of these ideas will work for you.

1. Catch your child doing something right.
2. Prove you listen by asking questions.
3. Schedule 10 minutes to talk with your child each day and stick to it.
4. Post a family calendar.
5. Create rules, then enforce them.
6. Regularly share meals with your child.
7. Write your child a thank-you note.
8. Give your child family responsibilities.

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Being a teen can be tough. This is a time when kids learn how to make decisions about relationships with their friends, family, and girlfriends or boyfriends. What they learn now about respect and how to treat others will affect their relationships throughout their lives. But kids can't do this by themselves. They need adults—parents, teachers, coaches, and others—to help them choose respect.

Did you know that 1 in 11 high school students reports being hit or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend at least once in the past 12 months? Even something such as putting someone down or trying to change how he/she dresses can be a sign of an unhealthy relationship. That's why adults, especially parents, need to talk to kids now about the importance of developing healthy, respectful relationships. You can start by helping your kids learn some key skills that will help them give and get respect in any relationship they have.

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10 Tips for Talking With Your Kids

Here are tips to keep in mind as you start to talk with your child. Consider them your checklist as you talk with your child about developing relationships.

1. Start early.
2. Create an open environment.
3. Talk with your child, not at your child.
4. Start conversations with your child.
5. Be honest. It's OK to say, "I don't know."
6. Be prepared. Practice if you have to.
7. Trust yourself. Communicate your values.
8. Take advantage of any opportunity to talk.
9. Ask questions.
10. Talk again and again.

Getting Started

The best time to talk about unhealthy relationships is before they start. But how do you get started? Before the conversation, first figure out the values and messages you want your child to have about dating and friendships. Having your own answers to these questions will help you talk with your child about healthy relationships.



Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

People in healthy relationships respect each other. They can talk honestly and freely to each other and share decisions. They trust and support each other and respect each other's independence. In contrast, an unhealthy relationship is unbalanced. One person may try to control or manipulate another to get his/her way.

What Can Happen?

Unfortunately, when healthy relationship skills don't develop, some kids find themselves in abusive relationships that are marked by frustration, anger, low self-esteem, and even physical injury. Kids who report being physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past year are more likely to report unhealthy habits such as binge drinking, suicide attempts, and physical fighting.

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It's Never Too Early to Talk

When should you start talking about "tough issues," such as how to treat others, dating, and respect? Experts say the earlier, the better. Helping your child develop healthy relationship skills early can help him/her interact positively with others as he/she grows. Here are some skills that you can work on with your child to help him/her develop and maintain healthy relationships:

Respect: showing consideration for the feelings and well-being of the other person.

Anger Management: dealing with anger in positive, nonviolent ways.

Problem Solving: knowing how to break problems down, find possible solutions, and consider the likely outcomes for each solution.

Negotiation and Compromise: turning problems into "win-win" situations in which each partner gets some of what he/she wants.

Assertiveness

Not Aggression: asking for what you want clearly and respectfully, without threats, intimidation, or physical force.

Fairness: when you disagree, try talking about problems without anger, name calling, holding grudges, or bringing up old hurts.