

# Healthy Relationships Toolkit

Empowering Teens to Build Safe & Supportive Relationships

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS TOOLKIT i2i YOUTH COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM: AT-A-GLANCE

i2i is the youth communications component of the Healthy Relationships Toolkit (HeaRT).\* i2i reinforces the lessons and messages contained in other components of HeaRT with messaging designed especially for young people. The i2i brand and associated messages were developed specifically by and for youth based on findings from focus groups. The program uses a “near-peer” model in which high school students—i2i Ambassadors—deliver healthy relationship messages to younger students in middle school, offering an authentic voice and perspective. i2i materials can be tailored to resonate with youth in every community.

### HOW WILL YOUTH BENEFIT FROM i2I?

i2i promotes healthy relationship behaviors and positive social norms using teen-led communications strategies and messages that reach youth where they are. i2i represents the youth voice. It appeals to youth in their own words and in their own spaces. i2i also reinforces the messages about healthy relationships taught in the HeaRT youth programs.

### WHAT IS THE i2i YOUTH COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM?

i2i is the youth communications component of HeaRT. Reaching youth through multiple touchpoints, i2i seeks to promote and increase awareness of positive social norms about healthy relationship behaviors. i2i includes the following components:

- **i2i Program Materials**
- **i2i Digital Resources**
- **i2i Ambassadors**
- **i2i Partnerships**

Each component complements the others and carries the i2i messages through multiple platforms to reach as many young people as possible wherever they are: offline or online, in their communities, or spending time with friends.

**Healthy Relationships Toolkit: Empowering Teens to Build Safe & Supportive Relationships** is a comprehensive model to prevent violence in adolescence. HeaRT focuses on 11- to 14-year-olds and is based on the best available evidence on what works to prevent violence in adolescence. It includes multiple components that target individuals, peers, families, schools, and neighborhoods. These components work together to promote respectful, nonviolent teen relationships.

In addition to the i2i Youth Communications Program, the HeaRT model also includes:

- General Capacity Assessment for Violence Prevention Tool
- Parent Programs
- Youth Programs
- Guide to Informing Policy
- Training for Educators
- Guide to Using Indicator Data



Individual communities can fully customize i2i materials to ensure they resonate with local youth.

i2i Ambassadors leverage the power and influence of near-peers (youth aged 15-18) to make them champions of the communications campaign. Ambassadors share their experience and knowledge with younger youth who may see them as a trusted and credible voice. That association means youth in the program are more likely to adopt and identify with campaign messages and to share those messages with their own peer groups. In this way, ambassadors help facilitate a shift in social norms related to healthy relationships and experiences.

The social and digital media component of i2i involves using popular social media platforms to create content, moderate discussions, and promote content and events. This component was designed to engage youth online and reinforce messaging.

## WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE i2i YOUTH COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM?

- **Build Knowledge** by educating youth on:
  - healthy, unhealthy, and unsafe teen dating relationships;
  - warning signs for unhealthy relationships; and
  - the role of technology in teen relationships (texting, social media, etc.).
- **Take Action** to promote the growth of healthy relationships and discourage engagement in unhealthy and unsafe relationships.
- **Empower Youth** by encouraging them to
  - trust in what they know;
  - listen to their inner voice instead of outside pressures; and
  - define their own healthy and safe boundaries and comfort levels in relationships and dating.
- **Access Resources** by directing youth to people who can help them navigate their relationships (e.g., trusted adults) and provide resources (e.g., hotlines, websites) for more information.

## HOW IS i2i DELIVERED?

### Time Required

Communities carrying out i2i are encouraged to host three i2i events per year, including one kickoff event. In addition, the i2i Program Facilitator will spend time training and supervising the i2i Ambassadors. The specific time involved in carrying out i2i will vary with the needs, interests, and resources of each community.

## Materials

Guidance on how to start the i2i program is provided in the **i2i Program Facilitator Guide**, available for free download from CDC's HeaRT website. Additional materials were designed to be professionally printed to maximize youth engagement and interest; these items are available as downloadable files that can be sent to a local printer. The [Healthy Relationships Toolkit website](#) provides more information on how to obtain these materials.

## STAFFING

The i2i Youth Communications Program is led by youth i2i Ambassadors who are trained and supervised by an i2i Program Facilitator. The key responsibilities for each of these roles are described below.

- **i2i Program Facilitator** is typically a staff member at the local health department, school, or other community organization who has experience working collaboratively with youth. The facilitator's role involves developing, supporting, and evaluating the i2i program, which includes recruiting, selecting, and training ambassadors, as well as supervising and supporting the ambassadors' participation in social media and in-person events. The i2i program facilitator might also serve as a HeaRT Youth Program facilitator, coach, or fulfill other HeaRT roles depending on the needs and resources of the staff and community.
- **i2i Ambassadors** are high school students selected and trained to implement i2i. This includes brainstorming, planning, and hosting events, and managing the i2i social media pages. i2i Ambassadors are volunteers but may receive a small incentive for their participation in the program.



## PROGRAM MATERIALS

- **i2i Program Facilitator Guide** provides guidance for the i2i program facilitators, including information on training ambassadors, providing guidance for social media engagement to ambassadors, and coordinating events.
- **Ambassador Handbook** provides guidance to near-peers on planning and hosting events for youth and managing social media.
- **iGuide** provides youth with information about healthy relationships, teen dating violence, and the i2i program in a fun and compelling way that generates excitement and raises awareness about the program and healthy relationships.
- **i2i Comic Book** demonstrates concepts in a visual storytelling format.
- **i2i Fortune Teller** reinforces healthy relationship messages and promotes i2i through a fun and engaging activity.
- **Hello/You Posters** provide i2i branded posters to hang in schools and around the community. The posters help promote i2i messages about healthy relationships.

## FACILITY NEEDS

Communities can hold HeaRT i2i Ambassador training activities in a classroom setting. The i2i events can take place in a variety of community settings such as libraries, schools, community centers, etc.

## COST

Costs associated with setting up the i2i Youth Communications Program will vary by community but are estimated below.

Type of Cost	Specific Costs	Estimated Cost
Staffing	i2i Program Facilitator	.25 full-time employee per community
Program Materials	i2i Program Facilitator Guide	Self-print (cost varies)
	i2i Ambassador Handbook	Self-print (cost varies)
	i2i Print Materials for Youth (like iGuide, Comic Book, etc.)	Self-print (cost varies)
Events	3 community events per year	\$150-600 per year (estimated) depending on resources available and potential in-kind donations from community partners
Brand Ambassadors	Incentives	\$500 per year per ambassador (suggested)
Facilities	School classrooms	No additional cost
	Community venues	Varies

## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS TOOLKIT!

The Healthy Relationships Toolkit—with all of the materials, guidance, and tools you need to implement HeaRT—is available on CDC's VetoViolence website at <https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/heart>. The Toolkit is your one-stop-shop for everything HeaRT.