

20: Healthy Relationships - Part 2

Words of Wisdom

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**Love is something
you can leave behind
when you die. It's
that powerful.**

*John (Fire) Lame Deer
Rosebud Lakota, 1972*

Are You Being Abused?

Take the most important quiz of your life to find out.

Read this list carefully and think about each question. Place a check mark next to the ones that apply to you. (You don't have to mark anything on your paper, if you prefer not to. But read through the list and think about your answer for each.)

Does your boyfriend or girlfriend:

- Act jealous or possessive?
- Demand to know where you are at all times?
- Try to control where you go, what you wear, or what you do?
- Text you all the time and get upset when you don't respond?
- Monitor your e-mail or profile on a social networking site?
- Call you names, ridicule you, criticize you, or put you down?
- Blame you for the hurtful things they say and do?
- Get jealous or angry when you spend time with friends or family?
- See other relationships as a threat?
- Try to "guilt" you or force you into having sex before you're ready?
- Think you're cheating if you talk or dance with someone else?
- Lose their temper easily?
- Get in your face during a disagreement?
- Break or throw things when they're angry?
- Hit, slap, push or kick you?
- Threaten to hurt them or you if your relationship ever ends?
- Drink or take drugs almost every day or go on binges?
- Think there are some situations when it's OK for a person to hit their partner?
- Scare you or threaten to hurt you?



If you said yes to even one of these questions, you may be in an abusive relationship. You should talk to your Native STAND facilitator, a counselor, another adult you trust, or contact the helpline below.

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

1-866-331-9474

1-866-331-8453 TTY

www.loveisrespect.org



Dating Abuse Fast Facts



PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

- 1 in 5 teens who have been in a relationship report being hit, slapped or pushed by a partner.
- 1 in 10 Native American teens report being hit, slapped or pushed by a partner.
- 1 in 3 girls who have been in a relationship say they've been concerned about being physically hurt by their partner.
- Women ages 16 to 24 experience the highest rates of intimate violence.
- 24% of males and 28% females in same-sex relationships (gay or lesbian) report physical violence by a partner.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- 1 in 4 teens who have been in a relationship say their boyfriend or girlfriend has tried to prevent them from spending time with friends or family; the same number have been pressured to only spend time with their partner.
- 1 in 5 teenage girls report that their boyfriend threatened violence or self-harm when they tried to breakup.
- 1 in 4 teen girls in a relationship report enduring repeated verbal abuse.

SEXUAL ABUSE

- 1 in 3 girls between the ages of 16 and 18 say sex is expected for people their age if they're in a relationship; half of teen girls who have experienced sexual pressure report they are afraid the relationship would break up if they did not give in.
- 1 in 4 girls who have been in a relationship reported going further sexually than they wanted to as a result of pressure.
- 1 in 4 teen girls who are in a relationship report they are pressured into performing oral sex or engaging in sexual intercourse.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Over half of all rapes occur before the victims reach 18 years of age.
- 3 out of 4 rape and sexual assault victims knew their offenders.
- 1 in 10 Native American teens report ever having been forced to have sexual intercourse.
- A study of 8th and 9th graders found that 1 in 4 have been victims of nonsexual dating violence, and 1 in 10 have been victims of sexual dating violence.
- Over 30% of teenagers do not tell anyone about being victimized by their partner.
- Native women are raped at a rate more than double that for all races.
- 1 in 3 Native American women will be raped in her lifetime.
- Twice as many urban Native women report that the first time they had sex it was forced (17% vs. 8% for whites)

HEALTH IMPACT OF DATING VIOLENCE

- 70% of girls and 52% of boys in high school report direct injuries from dating violence.
- 9% of girls and 8% of boys have been to the emergency room as a result of dating violence.
- People who are victims of dating violence are more likely to attempt suicide and engage in dangerous binge drinking and drug activities.
- Dating violence can lead to mental health problems, especially if the violence is emotional or psychological in nature. These problems can lead to substance abuse, depression and other problems later in life.
- Victims of dating violence are more likely to engage in unhealthy sexual behaviors, leading to health problems, STDs and teen pregnancy.

SAY SOMETHING!

- When you see abuse happening to a friend the best thing to do—believe it or not—is just to **SAY SOMETHING**. One of the reasons abusers continue to abuse is because they can get away with it—most of the time no one says anything to them. And one of the reasons victims stay in these relationships is they think it is normal—no one has said anything to make them think otherwise. The simple act of someone saying something and naming this behavior “abuse” is enough to get people thinking about how they treat the people around them.
- How do you know when to speak up? Relationships aren’t perfect. Everyone has fights, miscommunications, and rough times, so how do you know when a relationship is on the road to being abusive? The key is to know the warning signs, watch for a pattern, and then be willing to act if necessary. Trust your instincts. If you see or hear something that makes you feel uncomfortable or that you think crosses the line, chances are it’s a warning sign and should not be ignored.
- The other thing to do is talk to your friend about telling a counselor or getting help from another trusted adult. Dealing with an abusive partner is usually **VERY** hard to do, and even dangerous. Support your friend, but don’t get in the middle!



Teen Dating Bill of Rights and Pledge

I have the right:

To always be treated with respect. In a respectful relationship, you should be treated as an equal.

To be in a healthy relationship. A healthy relationship is not controlling, manipulative, or jealous. A healthy relationship involves honesty, trust, and communication.

To not be hurt physically or emotionally. You should feel safe in your relationship at all times. Abuse is never deserved and is never your fault. Conflicts should be resolved in a peaceful and rational way.

To refuse sex or affection at any time.

A healthy relationship involves making consensual sexual decisions. You have the right to not have sex. Even if you have had sex before, you have the right to refuse sex for any reason.

To have friends and activities apart from my boyfriend or girlfriend.

To end a relationship.

I pledge to:

Always treat my boyfriend or girlfriend with respect.

Never hurt my boyfriend or girlfriend physically, verbally, or emotionally.

Respect my girlfriend's or boyfriend's decisions concerning sex and affection.

Not be controlling or manipulative in my relationship.

Accept responsibility for myself and my actions.

Signature

Date

Healthy Conflict

- In most relationships, there will be some conflict. Since no two people have the same wants, needs, values, and beliefs, at some point those differences will cause them to disagree.
- Conflict itself is not the problem. Confrontation and releasing one's feelings—even when negative—are healthy in any relationship. What causes the problem between two people is the way they choose to deal with the conflict.

Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.

- Most of us have never learned how to handle negative emotions in a positive or constructive way.
- Because many couples don't know how to handle conflict, they may get hostile, or defensive; they may hold back their true feelings and avoid talking about the issues. Eventually, they may pull away from each other and the relationship loses its meaning and importance.

If some issue is bothering you, ask yourself these questions before you start a fight over it:

- Do I really have a valid complaint or am I just looking for a fight?
- Is my partner's behavior bad for the relationship? Or do I just want him or her to think or act the same way I do?
- What does this fight really mean to me? If I "win", what do I really win? Or will I just put more distance between us?
- Am I overreacting to the situation?
- How will my partner respond? Will taking a stand be worth the price I pay?
- Will my partner hear and understand my message the way I am saying it? Or am I too upset to make my point clearly?

Guidelines for a fair fight:

- Schedule your fights. This means when you both have time, when other people aren't around, and when you're both in the mood to handle conflict.

- **Establish rules and boundaries.** Make sure you both understand and agree with the rules. Most important: no physical violence at any time for any reason.
- **Write your complaint down.** Sometimes writing down your angry feelings lessens their intensity. Expressing feelings in writing can clarify the issues so you are better able to make a specific request for a behavior change.
- **Don't hit below the belt.** It's unfair to attack in an area that will cause pain or discomfort to your partner. If you know there are certain sensitive areas—like weight gain, ex-partners, or the death of a family member—don't bring it up when you're having a confrontation.
- **Keep current.** Don't store up all your complaints and get so bottled up that you finally burst with anger and hostility. Deal with issues as they come up.
- **Avoid communication jammers.** Don't fall in to common traps that prevent you from communicating clearly (like preaching, moralizing, ridiculing, threatening).
- **Don't fight just to win.** Remember, if you win but the other person loses, then you both lose. The only way to fairly resolve conflict is for both partners to win by negotiating a mutually rewarding compromise.
- **Don't take it out on the wrong person.** If you're mad at a teacher, don't take it out on your partner.
- **Don't withdraw, pout, or sulk.** Silence is a strong form of communication, but it cannot resolve conflict. If you do not communicate your needs, you can't expect them to be met.
- **Be honest but be kind.** It's important to be able to share personal thoughts and feelings even when they're negative. If you care for this person, then remember that you are not out to hurt or destroy them. (If you are, then you shouldn't be in this relationship.)
- **Be specific.** Don't hint at, be vague about, or expect the other person to know what is bothering you. Often, arguments are fought without the real issue ever being discussed. Conflict is best handled when two mature people can openly and specifically talk about the issue(s) that are really bothering them.
- **Limit your scope.** If you bombard a person with a lot of issues that you're upset about, your partner will get overwhelmed and probably won't be able to address any of them. If your list is very long, your partner might respond with, "If you don't like me, then why do you go out with me?"
- **Think before you speak.** Don't just blurt out words or statements that could deliberately hurt another person.
- **Use "I" statements.** Own your own thoughts and feelings by phrasing your comments with "I" (vs. "you", "you", "you").

- **Listen well.** If the other person disagrees, allow him or her to express their point of view. Show respect for your partner by listening and putting yourself in their shoes.
- **Have alternative solutions so both partners can win.** The world is not all black and white; there is a huge gray area where you can find many solutions for every problem.
- **Compromise, compromise, compromise.** People who truly care for and respect each other know the importance of compromise. They also know that compromise doesn't mean sacrificing their own needs; it means caring enough about another person to find a way of working out the problem.
- **Violence is NEVER OK.** No one at any time—no matter how valid his or her angry feelings are—has the right to inflict physical pain on another human being.
- **Don't rant, rave, yell, or scream.** Remember, "It isn't what you say, it's how you say it." If you unleash your anger with verbal abuse, your partner will not be able to hear what you are saying and will probably withdraw or get angry them self.
- **Know when to stop a fight.** Each person should be sensitive to the other. If either one goes too far, hits below the belt, or becomes verbally or physically abusive, the fight is probably out of control. It is doubtful anything will get resolved and things may actually get worse.
- **Agree to disagree.** Not every conflict will get resolved satisfactorily for both partners. Respect each other's differences and agree to disagree.
- **Bring conflicts to a close.** "I am sorry," "I forgive you" . . . it's important to bring an argument to an end on a positive note. If you haven't reached a point where either of you can say this, then close with something like, "We still need to resolve this. Can we talk about it again later?" Unresolved conflicts can fester and turn into an all-out war.
- **Making up is the best part.** When the fight is over, let it go. Holding a grudge will only make you feel worse and will weaken your relationship. Reaffirm your affection and respect for the other person and remember why you were attracted to them in the first place.



Risk & Protective Factors for Your Journey Along Life's Path

○ Risk factors hinder you on your path

- Examples of risk factors:
 - substance abuse
 - dropping out of school
 - losing connection with your family
 - criminal activity
 - gangs
- Risk Factors are detours and potholes that can cause you to stumble off the path.
- Some people become so lost and hopeless that they give up hope of ever finding their way back or of reaching their destination—instead, they may choose to end their journey forever.

○ Protective factors help you along the way on your path

- Examples of protective factors:
 - Connection to and support your family, your school, your community, your spirituality
 - Access to health care and mental health services
 - Skills in problem-solving, conflict resolution, and nonviolent handling of disputes
- One of the strongest factors that protect Native youth against suicide is their sense of belonging to their community and culture.

RESOURCES

Break the Cycle

<http://www.breakthecycle.org>

A national nonprofit organization addressing teen dating violence.

Know the Red Flags

<http://www.knowtheredflags.org>

Website created by a survivor of intimate partner violence; lists some common red flags of an abusive partner/relationship.

Maze of Injustice: The failure to protect indigenous women from sexual violence in the USA

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/women/maze/report.pdf>

A report on sexual assault in Indian Country produced by Amnesty International.

Love Is Not Abuse

<http://www.loveisnotabuse.com>

Love Is Not Abuse has developed a teen dating abuse prevention curriculum, hand books, and innovative research to help teens, teachers, parents, and domestic violence organizations. It is a project of Liz Claiborne Inc.

Love Is Respect

1-866-331-9474 (National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline)

<http://www.loveisrespect.org>

Provides resources for teens, parents, friends and family, Peer Advocates, government officials, law enforcement officials and the general public. All communication is confidential and anonymous. A project of Liz Claiborne, Inc.

Men Can Stop Rape

<http://www.mencanstoprape.org>

Men Can Stop Rape mobilizes male youth to prevent men's violence against women. They strive to build young men's capacity to challenge harmful aspects of traditional masculinity, to value alternative visions of male strength, and to embrace their vital role as allies with women and girls in fostering healthy relationships and gender equity.

National Child Abuse Hotline

1-800-4-A-CHILD—available 24/7

<http://www.childhelp.org>

The hotline offers crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. All calls are anonymous and confidential. A project of Childhelp, a national non-profit organization dedicated to helping victims of child abuse and neglect.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)—available 24/7

<http://www.ndvh.org>

Hotline advocates are available for victims and anyone calling on their behalf to provide crisis intervention, safety planning, information and referrals to agencies

National Runaway Switchboard

1-800-RUNAWAY or 1-800-786-2929—available 24/7

<http://www.1800runaway.org>

A hotline and website for runaway and homeless youth. Youth and family members can call to work through problems and to find local help.

National Sexual Assault Hotline

1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or <https://ohl.rainn.org/online> —available 24/7

Operated by Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), the nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization.

National Sexual Violence Resource Center

<http://www.nsvrc.org>

The nation's principle information and resource center regarding all aspects of sexual violence.

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

1-866-331-9474 or 1-866-331-8453 TTY

www.loveisrespect.org

A national resource that can be accessed by phone or the internet. Offers real-time one-on-one support from Peer Advocates trained to offer support, information and advocacy to those involved in dating abuse relationships as well as concerned parents, teachers, clergy, law enforcement, and service providers. A project of Liz Claiborne, Inc.

Office of Women's Health

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/faq/sexual-assault.cfm>

Frequently Asked Questions about Sexual Assault.

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)—available 24/7

<http://www.rainn.org>

The nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization.

The Safe Place

<http://www.thesafespace.org>

A comprehensive online resource to learn about dating violence. A project of Break the Cycle.

See It & Stop It

www.seeitandstopit.org

Provides youth the tools they need to address violence in their communities. Developed by the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Teen Action Campaign.

Sexual Violence Factsheets

http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/SV_factsheet-a.pdf

<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/SV-DataSheet-a.pdf>

Factsheets produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

That's Not Cool

<http://www.thatsnotcool.com>

An interactive website to raise awareness about digital dating abuse and stop it before it gets worse. It is designed to address new and complicated problems between teens who are dating or hooking up—problems like constant and controlling texting, pressuring for nude pictures, and breaking into someone's e-mail or social networking page. Sponsored and co-created by the Family Violence Prevention Fund, the Office on Violence Against Women, and the Ad Council.

Violence Against Women in Indian Country

http://www.ncai.org/ncai/advocacy/hr/docs/dv-fact_sheet.pdf

A factsheet developed by the National Congress of American Indians.