

# Relationship Smarts PLUS

**13 Lessons for Teens About Love and Romance**  
**By Marline E., Pearson, M.A.**

- Evidence-based program
- Instructor's Guide with 13 Lesson Plans for ages 12-16
- Engaging Student Workbook
- Youth-produced films that focus on healthy decision-making
- Loads of activities: drawing, sculpting, skills practice, roleplaying, stories, films, music and more
- Scenarios written by diverse youth
- Parent-Teen Connection activities

Relationship Smarts PLUS 5.0 is a 13-lesson evidence-based relationship skills curriculum for young teens (ages 12-16). The curriculum integrates positive youth development, life skills, healthy relationships, dating violence prevention, and pregnancy prevention in a comprehensive healthy relationship skills program. It is designed to help teens learn how to make wise choices about relationships, dating, partners, sex, and more.

Version 5.0 includes brand new and updated content important to today's youth, including sex trafficking prevention, technology in relationships, navigating relationships in the digital age, online porn, sexual assault, consent—and their impact on relationships.

Relationship Smarts PLUS has completed a five-year evaluation involving over 8,000 diverse teenagers in the state of Alabama. Researchers from Auburn University conducting the study report sustained gains over time. Findings include increases in students' realistic understanding of relationships and decreases in faulty relationship beliefs, broadened understanding of relationship aggression, and declines in aggression in relationships as compared to those in control groups.

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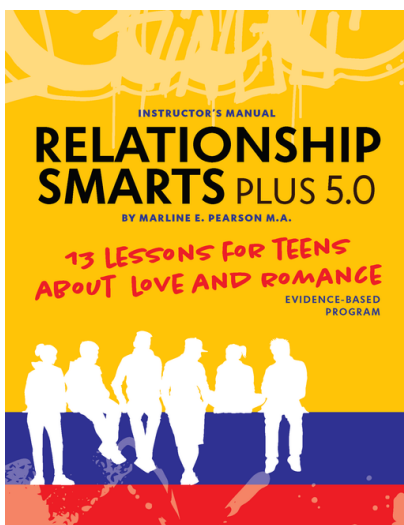
# Relationship Smarts PLUS

## Instructor's Kit **\$450** LN4

- Instructor's Manual
- Reproducible Handouts
- 1 Sample Participant Journal
- 1 Sample Primary Colors – Personality Profile
- Downloadable Lesson Power Points

## 10 Participant Journals **\$110** LN4 - J10

2-5 packs - \$105  
6 + packs - \$100



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Sample Lesson from Relationship Smarts PLUS  
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# Breaking Up and Dating Violence

## Overview

This lesson starts with issues surrounding breaking up. It follows naturally after the previous lesson on healthy and unhealthy relationships. The lesson then moves on to address dating violence. According to the CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2019), among the approximately 2/3's of high school students nationwide who reported dating in the past 12 months before the survey, 9.3% of girls and 7% of boys reported they had been hit, slammed into something, or injured on purpose by someone they were dating or going with. 12.6% of girls and 3.8% of boys reported they had been forced to do sexual things they did not want to do (counting kissing, touching, and being physically forced to have sexual intercourse) by someone they were dating or going out with. The survey finds that LGB and not-sure teens experience dating violence at high levels as well. 13% of LGB and 16.9% of not-sure teens reported physical dating violence. 16.4% of gay, lesbian, or bisexual students and 15% of not-sure students reported sexual dating violence.<sup>1</sup>

Some young people do not realize they are in relationships or situations that are abusive—verbally, emotionally, physically, or sexually. Many are unclear about what respect and normal boundaries in relationships look like. This lesson will educate young people about the continuum of unhealthy relationships, from the serious problem of disrespectful behavior to the most dangerous patterns of violence.

Drawing the line of respect early in relationships with partners or friends will be stressed. Practicing assertiveness skills to respond to disrespectful comments and behaviors, especially when these patterns **first emerge**, will be highlighted. The goal is to motivate teens to set high standards, recognize warning signs, reach out for support, and take action.

The lesson will also address sexual assault and consent. Finally, the lesson ends with a section on sex trafficking that aims to build awareness to reduce risks.

Youth will become familiar with important websites on dating violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking. *Love Is Respect* ([LoveIsRespect.org](http://LoveIsRespect.org)) is filled with interactive pages, quizzes, chatlines, and help 24/7. [RAINN.org](http://RAINN.org) (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) is the largest anti-sexual violence organization with over 1,000 local service providers. The site is filled with information and where and how to get help. Finally, youth are introduced to the Human Trafficking website, which includes an array of information and support: [HumanTraffickingHotline.org](http://HumanTraffickingHotline.org).

## Goals

- Address breaking-up issues: Is it time? Better and worse ways; moving forward.
- Deepen awareness of abusive behaviors and warning signs of dating violence.
- Raise awareness of types of dating violence; signs of greatest danger; getting help; harm to children.
- Increase understanding of sexual assault and what consent is and is not.
- Encourage setting boundaries and applying them at the first signs of disrespectful behavior, accessing help and support, viewing teen-friendly websites.
- Raise awareness of sex trafficking to reduce risks.

## Lesson at a Glance

### 6.1 Breaking Up (10 minutes)

Activities: *Is It Time?*; *Better and Worse Ways to Break Up*; *Surviving a Breakup*; *Music video & discussion*

### 6.2 Early Warnings and Red Flags (15–20 minutes)

Activities: *Red Flags*; Video Clip: *Teen Dating Violence PSA*

### 6.3 Violence: Why it Happens, What Helps, Signs of Danger (8 minutes)

Activities: *Types of physical partner violence*; *Warning Signs*; *Harm to Children*; Optional: *Ted Talk, A Call to Men*

### 6.4 Sexual Assault (5 minutes)

Activities: *Tea and Consent* video clip; Discussion on consent

### 6.5 Draw the Line of Respect (5 minutes)

Activities: *Draw the Line of Respect*; Video clip: *Respect Me*; *Helping Friends*

### 6.6 Sex Trafficking—Prevention (5 minutes)

**Trusted Adult-Teen Connection**

## Materials Checklist

### Resources Found at End of Lesson:

- 6a. *Breakup Tips*
- 6b. *Surviving a Breakup*
- 6c. *Instructor Discussion Tips for It Depends Cards*
- 6d. *Worried about a Friend?*
- 6e. *Sexual Assault and Consent*

- 6f. Templates for *Red/White Flag Squares*. One template has 4 squares with flags. Run on **red** cardstock paper. Cut in four squares and make enough, so each youth gets one. The second template has 4 squares and each has a flag with a question mark. Run on **white** card stock paper. Cut in four squares and make enough, so each youth gets one. Each youth gets a red and white square. Duplicate templates for electronic copying are found in the digital download for this lesson.

**Activity Cards Located in Back of the Manual:**

- 6g. *Warning Signs Activity Cards* (Locate colored cards in back of manual.) Cut them up.

**Journal:**

- *Draw the Line of Respect* (pgs. 14–15)

**Materials:**

- Purchase red and white cardstock paper for *Red Flags* activity.
- Three short videos: *Tea and Consent* (hyperlinked in the PowerPoint slide). *Teen Dating Violence PSA* and *Respect Me* are embedded directly into the PowerPoint slides.
- *A Call to Men*, a Ted Talk by Tony Porter, 11-minute video is optional. Preview and decide if you'll play. It is hyperlinked in the PowerPoint slide.

**Downloadable Resources Located at [DibbleInstitute.org/rsp5](https://dibbleinstitute.org/rsp5)**

- Lesson 6 PowerPoint Presentation
- Duplicate templates for *Red/White Flag Squares*, Resource 6f
- Duplicate masters for handouts and activity cards

## Preparation

- ☐ Preview Lesson 6 PowerPoint slides as you carefully read through the lesson.
- ☐ Duplicate *Breakup Tips* (Resource 6a) and *Surviving a Breakup* (Resource 6b) back-to-back for a handout and possible use as a *Trusted Adult-Teen Connection* activity. View the suggested music videos and determine if you have the time to play one. It will add time to this section.
- ☐ Review and select the *Warning Signs Activity Cards* (Resource 6g) for the *Red Flags* activity. Be sure to include “It Depends” cards as well as red flag-abuse cards. They are indicated on the cards with either a solid flag or a flag with a question mark.
- ☐ Locate templates at the end of the lesson (Resource 6f) for **Red** Flag squares and **White** Flag squares. Duplicate the Red Flags on **red** cardstock and the White Flags on **white** cardstock. Cut each page into four squares along cut lines. Duplicate enough, so each student gets a red and white square for the *Red Flags* activity. Be sure to collect after the activity and reuse. You may find laminating them helpful.

- ☐ Study the *Instructor Discussion Tips for It Depends Cards* (Resource 6c) to help you prepare for the activity.
  - ☐ Preview the video clips, *Tea and Consent* (hyperlinked in the PowerPoint slide), *Teen Dating Violence PSA*, and *Respect Me*, which are directly embedded in the PowerPoint slides.
  - ☐ Review the journal pages, *Draw the Line of Respect* (pgs. 14–15).
  - ☐ Duplicate *Worried about a Friend?* Resource 6d as a handout.
  - ☐ Browse the websites [LoveIsRespect.org](http://LoveIsRespect.org) and [RAINN.org](http://RAINN.org) to become familiar with the tabs, resources, and accessibility for the youth to access text, chat lines, info, quizzes, etc. Also, browse [humantraffickinghotline.org/national-hotline-overview](http://humantraffickinghotline.org/national-hotline-overview).
  - ☐ Duplicate *Sexual Assault and Consent* Resource 6e as a handout.
  - ☐ Preview the optional Ted Talk by Tony Porter, *A Call to Men* (hyperlinked), and decide if you will use. It will add time to the lesson.
-

## 6.1 Breaking Up

- Resource 6a: *Breakup Tips*
- Resource 6b: *Surviving a Breakup*
- Music video

10 minutes

**A**nnounce that today's session will deal with breakup issues. Following from the previous lesson, if a person realizes their relationship is unhealthy, it's a reason to break up. After examining some of the issues around breaking up, let the students know they'll move on to explore dating violence to better be able to recognize the signs and avoid or safely exit. (PP)

### ACTIVITY Is It Time?

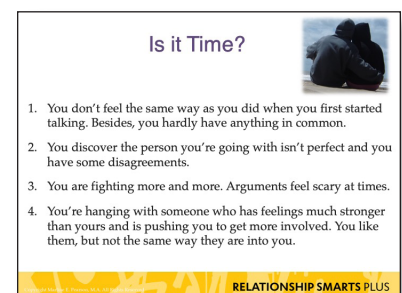
Begin this section with these points:

- ❖ *It's been said, "People are in your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime."*
- ❖ *Not every friendship or dating relationship is meant to last.*
- ❖ *Just as there are healthy and unhealthy ways to start a relationship, there are healthy and unhealthy ways to end one.*
- ❖ *But how do you know when it's time? How will you end it? And how will you move on?*
- ❖ *Many people have wondered about whether or not they should break up. Sometimes it's confusing.*
- ❖ *Let's look at a few situations. Give your opinion by a thumbs up or down (or shout out) on whether you think they should stay together or break up.*

### Situations: (PP)

Encourage discussion by asking why or why not and adding your wisdom as needed. Do not spend more than three minutes on this.

1. *You just don't feel the same way as you did when you first started talking. Besides, you two hardly have anything in common.*
2. *You discover the person you're going with isn't perfect and you have some disagreements.*
3. *You are fighting more and more and are unable to talk things out. Arguments feel scary at times.*



4. *You're hanging with someone who has feelings much stronger than yours and is pushing you for greater involvement. You like them, but not the same way they are into you.*

Ask if there are other reasons why a teen couple should break up.

## Common Reasons

Present some common reasons for breaking up: (PP)

- ❖ *The biggest reason people break up is because feelings change. After those love chemicals settle down a bit and you see the person more clearly—and as you learn more about their character, personality, interests, and values—you may decide that you really don't fit.*
- ❖ *Breaking up doesn't necessarily mean you or the other person is bad—you may just not be right for each other.*
- ❖ *You may have discovered some troubling behaviors, like difficulty handling anger or problems with drug or alcohol abuse.*
- ❖ *And another common reason is even when two people like each other, one may simply not be ready for that level of involvement. They may want to experience other people and places.*
- ❖ *The teen and young adulthood years are a time of figuring out yourself, where you are going, and discovering which friends and partners fit with you.*
- ❖ *Deciding to leave sex out of your teen relationships may make it easier to break up and learn from those experiences.*

### Common Reasons

- Feelings change. You find you're too different.
- You discover troubling behaviors.
- Even when two people like each other, one may simply not be ready for that level of serious involvement.
- The teen and young adulthood years are a time of figuring out yourself, where you are going, and discovering which friends and partners fit with you.
- Deciding to leave sex out of your teen relationships, may make it easier to break up and learn from those experiences.

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## ACTIVITY

### Better and Worse Ways to Break Up

Begin this activity with a quick brainstorm. Ask the group to identify the worst ways they've seen people break up among people at school or elsewhere. As they offer examples, ask them to describe how that feels to the person on the receiving end.

(PP) Brainstorm before advancing the bullets on the PowerPoint slide.

- Do it through a text.
- Get a friend to tell them.
- Don't say anything but let it be known through your social media.
- Send a photo/video of you and someone else.

### "Really Bad" Ways to Break Up

- Do it through a text
- Get a friend to tell them
- Don't say anything, put it on your social media.
- Just ignore the person (*ghosting*)
- Post a photo/video of you and someone else
- Go out with their best friend
- Do things to make the person break up with you.
- Say, "We can still hang as friends"

RELATIONSHIP SMARTS PLUS

- Just ignore the person in the hope they'll get the message. (Ghosting)
- Be seen with another person or worse, go out with their best friend.
- Do things to make the person break up with you.

Next, ask the group if the following statement is a good thing to say if someone wants to break up:

❖ *We can still hang with each other as friends.*

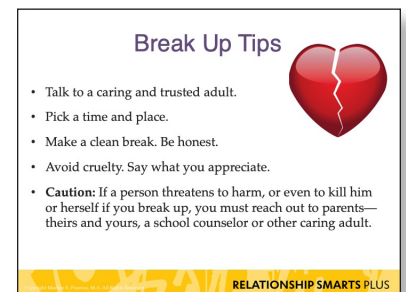
After you hear their responses, ask if that statement might merely be a cop-out or putting off the inevitable. Plus, does it give false hope to the one who is being dumped?

## Breakup Tips

- ❖ *So many people break up in these ways, yet we know it feels awful to the person on the receiving end.*
- ❖ *Let's now examine some tips on breaking up because there are better and worse ways to do it.*

(PP) Offer these breakup tips to the group.

1. **Talk to an adult you trust:** Go over the reasons it isn't working. Don't talk about it with friends that encourage drama or revenge. And if there are any concerns about your safety and how the person will react, ask a parent or trusted adult to assist you.
2. **Pick a time and a private place and tell the person yourself:** Don't do it around their friends. Have the respect to do it face to face. But don't tell them right before a big event like a test, a game, a cultural event where they're performing, a birthday, or the start of the school day. A good time is on a Friday after school or a Saturday. You will both have time to start getting over it and talk to supportive friends and adults before school begins again. If you are worried whatsoever about your safety, do not pick a private place. Get help from a caring adult.
3. **Make a clean break:** Don't beat around the bush or make empty promises. Be honest and direct, but not cruel. Do not give a mixed message. Say: "I want to break up." Or "I do not have the same feelings anymore." Remember, you do not have to argue or convince the person. Your feelings are your feelings.
4. **Avoid cruelty:** Mention something you appreciated about them, if appropriate.
5. **Caution:** If a person threatens to harm, or even kill, themselves if you break up, you must reach out for help. Their threat may make you feel guilty, scared, or angry, but you can and should still end things. Even though this is emotional blackmail to make you feel responsible and not break up, this threat has to be taken seriously. This is why you must reach out to parents—yours and theirs, a school counselor, or another caring adult for help in handling this. The national suicide crisis hotline is 1-800-273-8255. If there is immediate danger, call 911.



## Surviving a Breakup

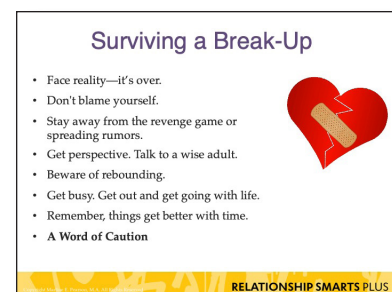
**Instructor note:** This section is important. Some youth experience serious emotional distress and even suicidal thoughts or attempts around a breakup.

**Offer these words of wisdom to survive a breakup when you are the one being dumped:**

- ❖ *First, it's important to have a reality check—most people will have heartbreaks. Very few people have the luck of not experiencing it at some point. Perhaps most important in handling a broken heart are the messages you give yourself.*
- ❖ *It is natural to feel really hurt. Go ahead and cry. Crying is a great way to get out your emotions. It's normal to feel miserable when someone you like breaks up with you.*
- ❖ *It is important to find a wise person you can trust to talk to, like a parent, an aunt, an older sibling or cousin. Pick a good shoulder to lean on—not a friend who encourages drama or revenge.*

Offer teens these basic tips for dealing with a broken heart and disappointment—surviving a breakup. It's important. Some teens go through a serious emotional spiral down—depression and even suicide—after a breakup. (PP)

- **Face reality**, and don't be obsessed with winning this person back. You can't force a relationship. It sacrifices your dignity to beg for a relationship, act desperate, or try to chase the person. And you deserve to be in a relationship with someone who wants to be with you and likes you for who you are.
- **Don't blame yourself.** There are lots and lots of reasons why relationships end. Make a list of your positive qualities. Work to make the changes you want. Ultimately, you want a relationship with someone who admires you, recognizes your qualities, is as crazy about you as you are about them, and accepts you as you truly are. Also, make a list of what you want in a partner. What qualities are you looking for, and what's important? What can you learn from this relationship?
- **Stay away from the revenge game.** Forget about getting even or spreading rumors. It might be tempting, but it's immature and it can keep you from moving on after a breakup.
- **Get perspective.** Most people go through more than one romance. This is a normal part of life. From a relationship that ends, you can grow wiser and more insightful about yourself, what you are looking for, and how relationships should be. Talking with a caring adult can give you some needed perspective.
- **Beware of rebounding.** Don't hop into another relationship right away to make your ex jealous or to make yourself feel better. This is not a good idea at all. Give yourself time.



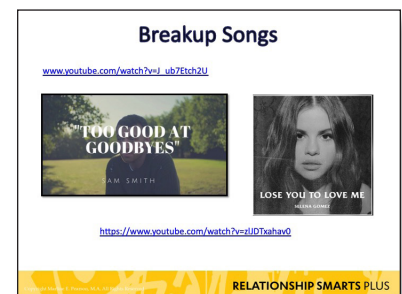
- **Get busy.** When you are out of tears, get busy and get outside. Do things with friends or family. Go biking, swimming, jogging, skating, kick a ball, shoot baskets, or take walks. Make it a point to do something physical every day.
- **Get going with life.** Call friends and make plans. Don't sit around feeling sorry for yourself.
- **Remember, things get better with time.**

**Caution:** If you are depressed and crying several months later, seek out a parent, relative, trusted adult, or school counselor to help you deal with your emotions and gain perspective.

## Music Video Opportunity

(PP) Consider playing one of these songs that offers important reflection messages for discussion. Ask them to listen to the lyrics carefully.

- ❖ **Sam Smith** (*Too Good at Goodbyes*) sings, “never want to get close again...never want to open up my heart to someone again.” Ask the group what they think about closing themselves up after a disappointing relationship or friendship? Might going slowly help a person discover if they are a good match and worthy of you?
- ❖ **Selena Gomez** (*Lose You to Love Me*) sings she had to “lose you to love me.” Ask: What does that mean to you? Point out that early romances and breakups can be learning experiences. Remember good relationships start with you—knowing yourself, what’s important to you, your goals. It’s knowing what is and isn’t a healthy relationship. It’s using the *Seven Principles of Smart Relationships* to guide you in getting to know a person. And importantly taking it slow.



## 6.2 Early Warnings and Red Flags

- Resource 6c: *Instructor Discussion Tips for It Depends Cards*
- Resource 6f: *Red/White Flag Squares* (one red and one white per person)
- Resource 6g: *Warning Signs Activity Cards*
- Video: *Teen Dating Violence PSA*

15–20 minutes

Young people see and hear examples of relationship disrespect and abuse in media and in everyday life. Many are unclear about what respect and normal boundaries in relationships look like. The first activity will help participants recognize signs of disrespectful, abusive, and controlling behaviors. The activity will help youth distinguish what behaviors are safe and normal and what behaviors cross the line into disrespect and abuse. **Note:** Sort through the *Warning Signs Activity Cards* and determine how many you will use. Be sure to select the *Red Flag Warning Signs* cards as well as include all or most of the *It Depends Warning Signs* cards.

### Introducing the lesson:

- ❖ *We've talked a lot about healthy relationships so far—what they are and how to build them.*
- ❖ *But an important skill is being able to recognize when there are signs of disrespect and abuse and to recognize them early in a relationship.*
- ❖ *Do you think it is possible to be in an abusive relationship or be abusive and not realize it? Listen to participants' responses.*

### Then continue with these points:

- ❖ *It is, in fact, possible to be in a relationship and not recognize abusive behaviors.*
- ❖ *Abuse can happen to, and be done by, people of all gender identities and in relationships of any sexual orientation.*
- ❖ *That's why today we'll examine behaviors that are safe and normal and those behaviors that cross the line into abuse.*
- ❖ *It is really important to know the signs because the deeper one gets into any relationship, the harder it is to get out.*
- ❖ *And the deeper one gets into an abusive relationship, the more dangerous it is to get out.*
- ❖ *We're going to do an activity to clarify the red flags indicating verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. And we'll also clarify what behaviors might be safe and normal. We'll further ask when and how they might cross the line into abuse.*

## ACTIVITY

## Red Flags

Select about 10 *Warning Signs* activity cards (Resource 6g), more or less depending on the time you have or information students have shared in earlier class times. Include all or some “It Depends” cards. Study the *Instructor Discussion Tips: It Depends Cards* (Resource 6c).

**(PP) Pass out a red and a white square to each youth.**

- ❖ *We’re going to do an activity to clarify behaviors that are verbally, emotionally, physically, and sexually abusive. And we’ll also clarify what behaviors are safe and normal.*
- ❖ *Notice one square is **red**, which stands for abusive, and the other is **white** with a question mark. The white square means “It Depends”—the behavior could be perfectly safe and normal, or not, depending on the situation. We’ll discuss these.*
- ❖ ***I am going to read a situation.** Once I finish and put my finger up, everyone will raise either a **red** square if you think it’s abusive or a **white** square if you think “it depends,” meaning it could be perfectly normal, depending on the situation. Let’s start.*



When **white** cards go up, even if it’s just one or a few, ask volunteers to say why the situation can be normal and safe. Then, ask everyone to think of a situation where it could cross the line into abuse.

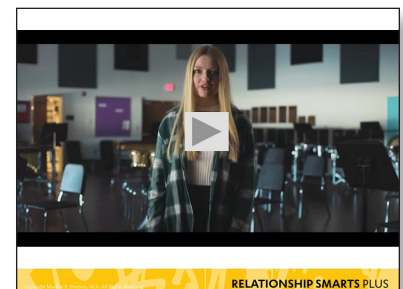
Be sure to also ask, even when everyone puts up a **red** card, why a situation is harmful—why it’s an abusive behavior.

**Important Instructor Note:** The discussion comparing and contrasting situations and behaviors that are safe and those that cross into harassment, sexual abuse, and dating violence **is the purpose of this activity**. With white cards, ask the youth to describe situations where the behavior described would be normal and safe, and then to describe the situations in which it crosses the line into abusive. This is where the instructor resource *Instructor Discussion Tips: It Depends Cards* (Resource 6c) will help you. Also, decide which red cards need emphasis and discussion. Carefully review and select the *Warning Signs* activity cards (Resource 6g) you will use.

## MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

## Teen Dating Violence PSA

**(PP)** Play this moving 3-minute clip produced by the *Southern Valley Alliance*. A diverse array of young people describe real-life examples.



## Important Facts

❖ **(PPs)** Dating violence can come in several forms. Read points off each slide.

- **Physical:** being grabbed, pinched, slapped, shoved, scratched, hit, punched, kicked, or slammed.
- **Verbal/Emotional/Psychological:** name-calling, shaming, bullying, embarrassing on purpose to threaten or harm a person's sense of self-worth.
- **Sexual:** forcing a partner to engage in a sex act when they do not want to or cannot consent. Includes unwanted kissing, touching, onto forced sex acts.
- **Stalking:** a pattern of behaviors that feel harassing or threatening that cause fear. Unwanted attention such as following you around, waiting for you, excessive texting.

❖ **(PP)** Abuse can also take place electronically—this technology has increased the potential for controlling behaviors.<sup>2</sup> People can be coerced and bullied through texts and other social media, and their activities/movements can be tracked and monitored.

❖ Read the text messages in the slide.

**(PP)** How common is dating violence?

❖ Among the approximately 2/3's of high school students nationwide who reported dating in the past 12 months before the CDC survey:<sup>3</sup>

- 9.3% of girls and 7.0% of boys reported they had been hit, slammed into something, or injured on purpose by someone they were dating or going with.
  - 12.6% of girls and 3.8% of boys reported they had been forced to do sexual things they did not want to do (counting kissing, touching, and being physically forced to have sexual intercourse) by someone they were dating or going out with. All footnotes here are from YRBS 2019.
- ❖ The survey finds that LGB and not-sure teens experience dating violence at high levels as well.
- 13% of LGB and 16.9% of not-sure teens reported physical dating violence.

### Forms of Dating Violence

- **Physical:** being pinched, hit, shoved, slapped, punched, kicked or slammed, scratched, grabbed.

### Forms of Dating Violence

- **Verbal/Emotional/Psychological:** name-calling, shaming, bullying, embarrassing on purpose to threaten or harm a person's sense of self-worth.

### Forms of Dating Violence

- **Sexual:** forcing a partner to engage in a sex act when they do not want to or cannot consent.

### Forms of Dating Violence

- **Stalking:** a pattern of behaviors that feel harassing or threatening that cause fear.
- Unwanted attention: following you around, waiting for you, excessive texting.



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### Digital Abuse



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Among teens who reported dating or going out with someone in the past 12 months:

- 9.3% girls and 7% boys reported Physical Dating Violence
- 12.6% girls and 3.8% boys reported Sexual Dating Violence
- LGB and not-sure teens:
  - 13% of LGB students and 16.9% of not-sure students reported physical dating violence
  - 16.4% of LGB students and 15% of not-sure students reported sexual dating violence
- It's an issue for everyone

RELATIONSHIP SMARTS PLUS

- 16.4% of gay, lesbian, or bisexual students and 15% of not-sure students reported sexual dating violence.

❖ *It is important for everyone to have an awareness and develop skills to protect themselves.*

#### Many teens do not report it:

- ❖ **(PP)** *Many teens do not report violence. They may be afraid or embarrassed to tell friends or family.*
- ❖ *In addition, sexual minority youth may feel stigma, discrimination, family disapproval, or social rejection.*
- ❖ *Reaching out for help to get to safety and to begin a process of healing is important for anyone experiencing any form of abuse. In a few minutes, we'll explore a couple of websites and discuss who a person could reach out to for help.*
- ❖ *But first, we'll look at different forms of **physical** dating violence.*



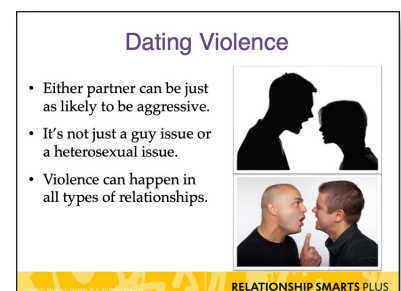
## 6.3 Violence: Why It Happens, What Helps, Signs of Danger

- Optional video: *A Call to Men*  
8 minutes

This section starts with a discussion of teen physical dating violence and then moves into a deeper discussion of types of intimate partner violence (IPV). It underscores that all types and levels of abuse should be taken seriously by everyone—all types are unhealthy and dangerous, even potentially lethal—teens will learn about the signs of greatest danger. The goal is to help youth steer clear of dating violence from the start and to help young people already involved in unhealthy and/or dangerous patterns and relationships recognize it, take action early, and exit safely.

#### **(PP)** Introduce the topic with these points:

- ❖ *Let's talk more in-depth about dating violence.*
- ❖ *When it comes to young couples, either partner is just as likely to be aggressive in their relationships.<sup>4</sup>*



- ❖ *It's not just a guys' issue, as some think. And it's not just a heterosexual issue. Violence can happen in all types of relationships, regardless of how one identifies in terms of gender or sexual orientation.*
- ❖ *We're going to examine types of physical violence in relationships. Keep in mind that all types are harmful, and all types can be very dangerous. Always keep that in focus.*

## Arguments that Get Physical

- ❖ **(PP)** *This is the most common form of partner violence.<sup>5</sup>*
- ❖ *Dating violence is most commonly (but not always) the result of getting into arguments and not having the skills to handle strong emotions and argue safely.*
- ❖ *Then the argument spills over into slapping, pushing, shoving, hitting, and throwing things.*
- ❖ *It is done by all gender identities and people of all sexual orientations.<sup>6</sup>*
- ❖ *We'll call these, "**Arguments that get physical.**"\* They are unhealthy and unsafe. **Never** downplay them, even if they happen infrequently and even if they're common with people around you.*
  - *For some, arguments that get physical happen **once** in a lifetime; for others, once in a while; and others **every time** they have a disagreement. They may not end up in the hospital, but such arguments take a serious toll on emotional and physical health and harm children. And, even if it only happens once, it could be lethal.*
  - *Consider the size and strength of a person. Don't downplay it for anyone—anyone can hurt someone smaller—and any aggressive action could be unintentionally lethal.*
- ❖ *The bottom line is any disrespectful or aggressive behavior needs action. It's not a sign of a healthy relationship.*
  - *Verbal abuse also needs to be taken seriously. A pattern of nasty name-calling, shaming, and bullying takes a psychological toll and can destroy a person's sense of self-worth.*
  - *It's important to stop the behavior before it becomes a pattern or gets worse.*

**\*Instructor Note:** Research literature refers to this as situational couple violence.<sup>7</sup>

### (PP) What Can Help?

- ❖ *Communication and conflict-management skills can help people who have trouble handling their emotions and arguments safely.*

#### Arguments that get physical

- Gets verbally nasty and spills over into shoves, slaps, push, and hitting.
- For some it happens once in a while—for others all the time.
- It is **Unhealthy & Unsafe**.



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#### Communication Skills Can Help

- Mastering the **Time Out Skill** can help you put the brakes on, before arguments get out of control.
- Using the **Speaker-Listener Technique** can help you to listen and better understand each other.

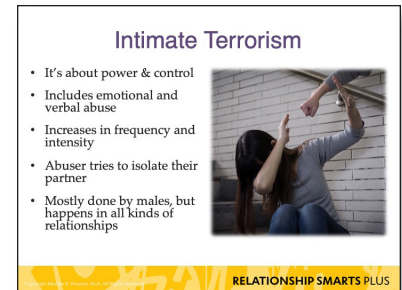
**Skills help, but **never ever** minimize arguments that escalate. They can be a path to great danger, even lethal. They are **not** part of a healthy relationship.**

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- Mastering the **Time Out Skill** can help you put the brakes on, back off, and cool down **before** arguments get out of control.
  - Using the **Speaker Listener Technique** can help you when you come back after calming down to deal with your issues or problems.
  - You'll be learning these skills and more later in this program.
- ❖ Skills can really help, but never ever minimize arguments that escalate. They can be a path to greater danger.
- ❖ **Heads up and beware:** There is another type of violence called intimate terrorism. Let's examine that now.

## Intimate Terrorism<sup>8</sup>

- ❖ **(PP)** This type of partner violence is **not** about a person lacking communication skills:
- It is about a person wanting total **control and power** over someone.
  - It includes **emotional and verbal abuse** designed to wear a partner down, destroy their self-esteem, and narrow their consciousness so that they do not feel capable of leaving.
  - Typically, the abuser tries to **isolate** and cut their partner off from others.
  - This form of violence typically increases in intensity and frequency.
- ❖ The majority of perpetrators of **intimate terrorism\*** are male. But it happens in all kinds of relationships, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- ❖ **Once a person gets attached**, an intimate terrorist may not let their partner go.
- A victim is never more in **danger of being killed than when trying to leave** an intimate terrorist. Abusers, more than anything, want to keep their control. That is threatened if their partner leaves.
  - Most killings happen when the partner decides to leave. According to the national crime data, half of all female murder victims are killed by intimate partners. 1 out of 13 male murder victims are killed by intimate partners.<sup>9</sup>
  - This is why it is so important for a person to reach out to dating violence experts **for help in getting to safety—in devising an exit plan.**



- The CDC reports that data from U.S. crime reports suggest that about 1 in 5 homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner.<sup>10</sup>

**\*Note:** Michael Johnson, a leading researcher in the field, and others use the term “intimate terrorism”. This type of violence is also referred to as **coercive control violence**.

## Early Warnings & Signs of Greatest Danger

- ❖ **(PP)** *Unhealthy patterns in relationships can start early. Some people may think that verbal abuse is normal—it may be what they have seen around them.*
- ❖ *It is really important to recognize the early warnings in dating and get out because the **deeper one gets into an abusive relationship, the harder and more dangerous** it can be to get out. (Read the list on the left.)*
- ❖ *Remember, when those love chemicals are surging, it makes it harder to see those early warning signs. Because of this, people may often rationalize away or minimize those red flag behaviors. For example, “My partner just loves me. That’s why they’re jealous and don’t want me going out with friends.”*

Early Warnings	Signs of Greatest Danger
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls you names, criticizes you, insults you, cusses you out in private or public</li> <li>• Texts you constantly; checks up on you</li> <li>• Wants exclusive attention; jealous</li> <li>• Tries to keep you from friends, activities you like</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes you feel incompetent, stupid; you lose self-confidence</li> <li>• Controls where you go, who you talk to, what you do; isolates you</li> <li>• Mistreats &amp; says you provoked it</li> <li>• Threatens to “out” you</li> <li>• Threatens, scares, injures you</li> <li>• Forces sex; isolates you</li> <li>• Has a gun; has made threats</li> </ul>

**Review early signs on the left and then read the list on the right of the slide on the signs of greatest danger.**

- ❖ *Once a victim is attached, an abuser can do anything to keep their partner from leaving— even killing or threatening to kill themselves.*

**Instructor Note:** There is a powerful TED talk by Leslie Morgan Steiner, author of *Crazy Love*. It’s a poignant story of how a highly educated and accomplished professional woman got gradually sucked into a violent relationship that put her life in danger. She tells how it happened and how she got out. It may serve as useful background information to help you prepare to deliver the lesson and especially for fielding questions about why victims stay.

## Harm to Children

- ❖ *You are all at the beginning of a lifetime of romantic relationships.*
- ❖ *An important reason to steer clear of or exit an abusive relationship now, when you are young, is so that it doesn’t become a pattern.*
- ❖ *Children who grow up in abusive homes can be harmed in subtle and not-so-subtle ways.*
- ❖ *Children who experience domestic violence are more likely to experience a wide range of problems.<sup>11</sup>*

**(PPs)** Read the points on both slides and draw from the information below:

- ❖ *Abuse during pregnancy can cause harm to the developing fetus. There's an increased chance of miscarriage, premature birth, and low birth weight. These babies are at an increased risk of serious health problems, including infant mortality. There can be lasting major or minor disabilities.*
- ❖ *Mothers who experience abuse in their relationships during their pregnancy may be more likely to use alcohol. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause fetal alcohol effects—some may be major, and some may be subtle brain disorders not evident right away.<sup>12</sup>*
- ❖ *After birth, an abused mother may be worn down emotionally, depressed, and unavailable to nurture her child. This is a danger for babies. Babies need lots of loving interactions for their little brains and bodies to grow and to form an attachment bond with their parent(s).*
- ❖ *A child can get anxious, worried, and scared. The child does not have to be hit directly to be impacted by violence in the home.*
- ❖ *Children living in homes with domestic violence are more likely to develop emotional and behavioral problems, be depressed, have learning disabilities and problems in school, and/or engage in aggressive behaviors themselves as they grow.*

### Conclude:

- ❖ *If you grew up with violence in your home, you know how bad it felt.*
- ❖ *Be aware of your own behaviors and the behaviors of a partner.*
- ❖ *Always know that your intimate choices can involve a child too. A question to ask in these situations is, do you think this is the parent you'd want for your child.*


## OPTIONAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITY A Call to Men

In this optional Ted Talk by Tony Porter (11 minutes), he recounts the kinds of messages drummed into him as he was growing up in the South Bronx. **(PP)**

- ❖ *Porter's story gives us insights into how a guy could develop a mentality that would lead him to disrespect and abuse females. He admits that what his friends were doing was rape.*

### Harm to Children

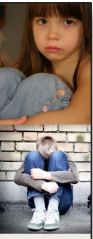
- Abuse during pregnancy can do harm to the unborn child.
- A worn down or depressed mother may be unable to nurture her child.
- Children get anxious, scared and worried when there is violence between parents/adults.



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### Harm to Children

- Children in homes with domestic violence (DV) have a greater chance for emotional and behavioral problems and to be depressed.
- They have a greater chance to have learning disabilities and problems in school, and/or engage in aggressive behaviors themselves as they grow.
- Children are harmed by just living with it—they don't even have to be hit.




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### A Call to Men – Tony Porter

- Telling personal stories of growing up in the South Bronx, Porter shows how the mentality drummed into him as a boy can lead males to disrespect, mistreat and abuse females and each other.

(11-minute TED Talk)

[youtube.com/watch?v=td1PbsV6880](https://youtube.com/watch?v=td1PbsV6880)



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❖ *He'll also tell how he broke out of that cycle. He's a real stand-up guy. Let's watch it now.*

When finished, ask participants to identify one thing that stood out to them. Conclude by pointing to his concern for children and what adults model for children.

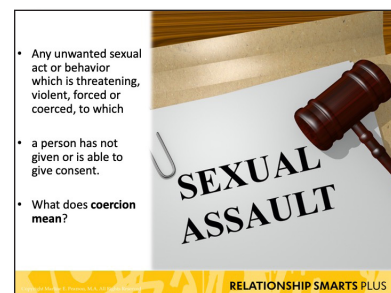
## 6.4 Sexual Assault

- Resource 6e: *Sexual Assault and Consent*
  - Video clip: *Tea and Consent*
- 5 minutes

**Instructor note:** Let students know you will be discussing a sensitive topic and that you are available to talk to anyone privately.

❖ **(PP)** *Let's first define sexual assault.*

- *Sexual assault can take many forms, including attacks such as rape or attempted rape, as well as any unwanted sexual contact.*
- *It can be when someone touches any part of another person's body in a sexual way, even over someone's clothes, without that person's outright consent.*
- *Think of sexual coercion as a range of behaviors. It can vary from someone verbally egging you on to someone actually forcing you to have contact with them.*

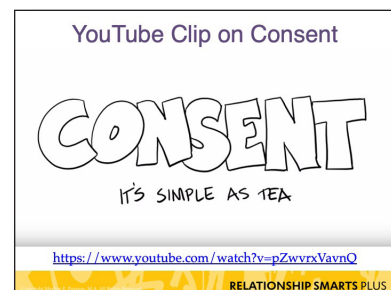


**Let's examine that word coercion. Ask:** *What are some non-physical ways a person can be coerced?*

- ❖ *A person can be pressured, tricked, or forced in non-physical ways. It can be verbal and emotional, in the form of statements that makes a person feel pressure, guilt, shame, or even blackmailed or outed.*
- *For example, "I'll break up with you if you don't do such and such." Or making a person feel guilty, as in, "If you loved me, you would..." or "I think you are ready—what's the matter with you"...to threats of telling lies or rumors about you.*

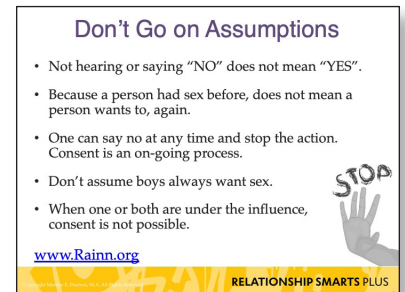
### MEDIA OPPORTUNITY Tea and Consent

**(PP)** *Let's watch this short clip on consent as it applies to sexual assault. Play the 3-minute clip.*



❖ **(PP) Conclude with these key points:** *The video clip, Tea and Consent, did a great job of showing what consent is and is not. It underscores an important point—don't go on assumptions when it comes to sex.*

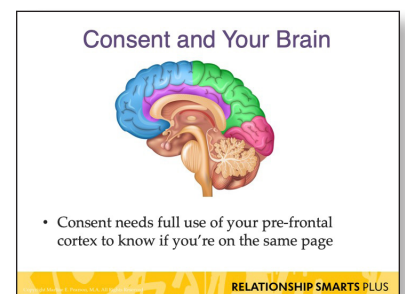
- *Whether it's not hearing or not saying a direct "no" and the other person assuming it's "yes". Silence is never consent.*
- *Or, assuming because they had sex before, a person wants to again. Or a person feeling they must engage again.*
- *Or, because the process of getting physical has started, one assumes it has to continue. Just because one says yes to one activity (e.g., kissing, touching, grinding, etc.) does not imply consent to another. The action must be stopped instantly when consent is withdrawn, as in "No. I don't want this."*
- *Or, assuming boys always want sex. Consent should be a two-way street. Boys, too, must voluntarily agree to physical intimacy. And erections do not equal consent and should not be subject to manipulation or pressure from girls or other guys.*
- *And, when someone or both are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, consent is not possible, and in many states, it could be charged as sexual assault.*
- *Consent also applies to digital images. If a person receives a sexually explicit photo/video, they cannot forward it or post it without permission. And, if the person is under 18, possession or distribution (even if consensual) may be in violation of child pornography laws and prosecuted.*



## Consent and Your Brain

❖ **(PP) Consent** needs the full use of your pre-frontal cortex or what we might call your higher-smart brain. This part of your brain allows reason, logic, judgment, and decision-making. Once sexually aroused or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, it's hard to tap the full power of your higher brain.

- *The safest way to be sure things are consensual is to talk **before** engaging in physical intimacy and in a sober state.*
- *Sex should involve **mutuality**. That means mutual power (equality), mutual desire, and mutual pleasure.*
- *It takes time to get to know someone and build trust to have the kinds of honest conversations to know if you're on the same page about what you're doing.*
- *In a healthy relationship, both partners feel comfortable with the level of physical activity, whether that means holding hands, kissing, or touching, on to greater physical involvement.*
- ***You** are in charge of how far you want to take it with someone.*



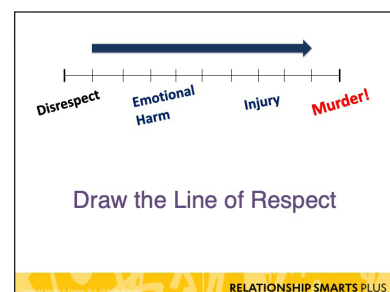
Let students know you can direct them to a school counselor or others who specialize in helping teens. Inform students of the anti-sexual violence website [RAINN.org](https://RAINN.org) for information and getting connected to help.

Pass out Resource 6d *Sexual Assault and Consent* and review the points with students. Ask which points they feel are new or most important.

## 6.5 Draw the Line of Respect

- Journal: *Draw the Line of Respect* (pgs. 14–15)
  - Resource 6d: *Worried about a Friend?*
- 5 minutes

- ❖ **(PP)** *Here is a critical point that most people don't realize. Partner violence doesn't pop up out of nowhere one day. Injuries and even killings don't pop up out of nowhere.*
- ❖ *It can be traced back to earlier behaviors of disrespect, such as put-downs, name-calling, pressuring, shaming, controlling behaviors, etc.*
- ❖ *Dangerous love can start with these disrespectful words and behaviors and escalate into pushing, shoving, hitting, and on to serious harm, injury, controlling behaviors, and even murder.*
- ❖ *It is important to assertively draw the line at the first sign of disrespect.*
  - *You should insist on being spoken to respectfully from the very start.*
  - *Put-downs, name-calling, crude cussing, hostile accusations, threats, pressuring, and controlling behaviors are not part of a healthy relationship.*
  - *And slapping, shoving, or pushing is unacceptable. Remember dating violence begins from these first behaviors.*
  - *When it comes to physical intimacy, you absolutely have a voice and do not have to do anything you don't want to do—from holding holds, kissing, touching, to more.*
- ❖ *Your goal is to not tolerate disrespect from when it first starts—physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual.*



- ❖ *Everyone deserves respectful language and behaviors.*
- ❖ *No matter what has happened in the past, it's never too late to raise the bar for how you expect to be treated and for how you treat others.*
- ❖ *Always remember: A victim, no matter what, is never to be blamed for the actions of a perpetrator.*

## Media Opportunity

### Respect Me

- ❖ **(PP)** *Let's watch this video clip on respect—on drawing the line of respect. (2:21 minutes)*

**Instructor Note:** The film's message is self-evident and very inspiring. No need for discussion.



## Getting Help & Helping Friends

- ❖ *As we mentioned earlier, there are many reasons why so many teens who experience forms of abuse, assault, or coercion do not report it and reach out for help.*
- ❖ *It is important to reach out to caring adults.*
- ❖ **(PP)** *Let's look at a website that is full of info, videos, quizzes, how to tell what kind of relationship you have, if it's abusive, what to do, how to help a friend, pages for LGBTQ+, and more.*

**Note:** Take a moment with teens to browse the Love Is Respect website.

A great opportunity to have youth take out their phones and locate. Click on some of the tabs so they can see this rich trove of resources. Please have them note the “En Español” on the homepage. There is a 24/7 chatline, a direct voice helpline, and a texting option.

- ❖ **(PP)** Pass out *Worried About a Friend*, Resource 6d. Give a few seconds to look at “Signs...”. Invite any questions on “What can I say?” and “What can I do?”.

**Instructor Note:** Always remind students that you can direct them to a counselor or support services that specialize in helping teens.



## Activity Review and Practice

**(PP) Journal:** Turn to pg. 14 of your journal, and let's do a quick collective review. Let's recall as many examples of disrespect and early warning signs as you can. Jot them down.

- ❖ Then take one example and ask the whole group to describe what a person could safely do or say in such a situation to draw the line of respect.
- ❖ Focus on being calm, assertive, and effective, so the person really hears you. What could be said to show the person you expect respect and have a bottom line for how you expect to be treated or spoken to?

After listening to their responses, ask them to focus on pg. 15 of their journal. Also, remind them of a final key point: *A victim, no matter what, is never to blame for the actions of a perpetrator.*

### Draw the Line of Respect

1. Let's recall examples of **disrespect** and early warning signs of abuse.
2. Choose one example. What could a person say or do to draw the line of respect?
3. Create an assertive (not aggressive) way to respond that shows you expect respect.

Journal p. 14-15

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## 6.6 Sex Trafficking— Prevention

5 minutes

### Realities of Sex Trafficking

Introduce this section with these points:

- ❖ **(PP)** Sex trafficking is the use of trickery, false promises, manipulation, and coercion to make a person perform sex acts that the trafficker profits from.
- ❖ Anyone can be a victim. It's not just females who are trafficked. It happens to males. It happens to young people who identify as LGBTQ+.
- ❖ Most sex trafficking in the U.S. is not done by strangers kidnapping a youth.
- ❖ Mostly, the trafficker is a person the victim knows or has come to know and trusts—someone in the community, a family member, a friend's parent or relative, or someone they meet online. Traffickers also use other young people to befriend and recruit their victims.

### Sex Trafficking



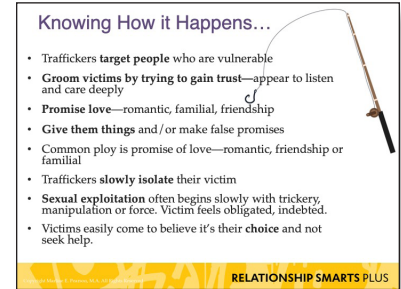
A form of modern-day slavery

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- ❖ *Traffickers are slick manipulators who know how to slowly lure a person in. We call this **grooming**.*
- ❖ *Victims can easily come to believe they have chosen to do this and do not see themselves as victims. Because of this, many do not seek help to leave.*

## Knowing How It Happens

- ❖ **(PP-Advance bullets)** *It can happen to anyone, but traffickers especially prey on **people who are vulnerable**.*
- ❖ *Traffickers **target their victims** by looking for people who have emotional or material needs that are not being met, such as homelessness, feeling rejected, alone, living or recently out of foster care, or wanting to escape a home with violence or addiction.*
- ❖ *Traffickers groom their victims by trying to **gain trust** by getting to know their victims. They slowly build a relationship and establish trust by appearing to **listen and care deeply**. They make it seem like they have the answer to what the person needs.*
- ❖ *Once traffickers know their victim's needs or wants, they **give them things** to meet their material or emotional needs and/or offer false promises to them.*
  - *I understand you. I'll take care of you. You can live at my place. I'll get your drugs.*
  - *I can get you a great job in modeling...in the music... or entertainment industry.*
- ❖ *A common **ploy** is to form a romantic relationship with a potential victim.*
  - ***The promise of love**—whether it's romantic, friendship, or familial—is one of the most common weapons used in sex trafficking.*
  - *Being loved is one of our most essential human needs.*
- ❖ *As the relationship and trust grow, the trafficker slowly **isolates**—cuts the victim off from friends and family. The victim becomes **dependent on their trafficker**.*
- ❖ *Victims can begin to feel **obligated, indebted**—even loyal to their trafficker.*
  - *They know that what they've been given can be taken away.*
  - *In this way, many can come to believe it is **their choice**, and the consequence of leaving may seem worse than losing access to what they are getting.*



❖ The **sexual exploitation** often starts slowly. The trafficker might ask their victim to have sex “just this once” or to “help me out”. Or, “let me take a few pictures or videos of you—you’re so beautiful.”

- A common story told by survivors of sex trafficking is that they were made to view porn to “train” them to feel this is what’s to be expected and normal.

❖ **(PP) Social media is increasingly used to recruit victims.**

- Traffickers can gain access to information on a potential victim from their social media profiles—their interests, if they are happy or not.
- They’re especially on the watch for youth who are unhappy and post expressions of emptiness and disappointment, such as “nobody gets me” or “my life sucks” or “I need to get out of here”. They may start by commenting on photos.
- It’s the same process of building a relationship, pretending to understand and care, and seemingly able to offer what the victim needs.
- They then convince the person to meet up or send a risky picture.



## Reducing Risks—Prevention

1. Know that everyone **deserves love, kindness, caring, and protection without a price.** (PP)

- **No one’s body should be a product** to be bought and sold for someone else’s money gain or pleasure. **No one** should ever have to exchange sex for their safety or survival.

2. Become aware of any **unmet needs** you might have that could make you a target. We all have four basic human needs—physical, emotional, mental, and social. Some of us have not gotten these needs met in healthy ways growing up through no fault of our own.

- **Work to build yourself up to be the person you want to be.** Take steps towards where you want to be in 5 or 10 years.
- Learn what real love is and is not; what a healthy relationship is and is not.

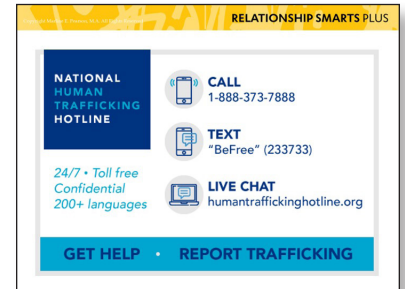
3. If you have **a gut feeling something’s not right**—tales of romantic and everlasting love; being showered with gifts, money, or promises sounding too good to be true; getting involved (online or in-person) in a fast-moving relationship with big age or financial differences, check it out with a safe and trusted adult.



- A **trusted adult** is someone who genuinely cares about you without a price—who accepts and supports you in being who you want to be. We all need safe and trusted adults in our lives.

### (PP) Getting Help and More Information

- ❖ *The Human Trafficking Hotline.* Text 233733 or Call 1-888-373-7888 or use chatline. Click En Español. [humantraffickinghotline.org/national-hotline-overview](https://humantraffickinghotline.org/national-hotline-overview).
- ❖ **Instructor note:** More information is found at The Polaris Project [polarisproject.org/sex-trafficking/](https://polarisproject.org/sex-trafficking/).
- See Love and Trafficking stories and videos [polarisproject.org/love-and-trafficking/](https://polarisproject.org/love-and-trafficking/).
- Documentary on Sex Trafficking [pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/sex-trafficking-in-america/](https://pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/sex-trafficking-in-america/).



## Trusted Adult-Teen Connection

(PP) Choose or have students choose which resource to use for the connection activity. Have available *Breakup Tips* and *Surviving a Breakup*, Resource 6a and 6b, or *Worried about a Friend?*, Resource 6d, or *Sexual Assault and Consent*, Resource 6e. Have teens ask a parent or trusted adult to read through and discuss together the points that are most important.

### Trusted Adult-Teen Connection

- Choose one for the connection activity
  - *Breakup Tips & Surviving a Breakup*
  - *Worried About a Friend*
  - *Sexual Assault and Consent*
- Ask your parent or trusted adult to read and discuss what each of you feel are the most important points.
- Have your parent or trusted adult sign and return for credit

### Notes

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance — United States, 2019*, 69(1). <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/2019/su6901-H.pdf>
- 30% of teen respondents said they received texts 10, 20, or 30 times an hour from their partner demanding to know where they are, who they are with, and what they are doing. Reported in March 1, 2007 E-gram from *The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy*.
- CDC YRBS 2019.
- Courtain, A., & Glowacz, F. (2021). Exploration of dating violence and related attitudes among adolescents and emerging adults. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(5-6), NP2975–NP2998. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518770185>

Also see Mulford, C., & Giordano, P. C. (2008). Teen dating violence: A closer look at adolescent romantic relationships. *National Institute of Justice Journal*. <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/teen-dating-violence-closer-look-adolescent-romantic-relationships>.

Data on victimization from CDC YRBS 2019.

- 5 Love, H. A., Spencer, C. M., May, S. A., Mendez, M., & Stith, S. M. (2020). Perpetrator risk markers for intimate terrorism and situational couple violence: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 21(5), 922–931. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018801331>

Walby, S., & Towers, J. (2018). Untangling the concept of coercive control: Theorizing domestic violent crime. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 18(1), 7–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895817743541>

- 6 Blais, M., Hébert, M., Bergeron, F. A., & Lapierre, A. (2020). Dating violence experiences among youths with same-gender and multi-gender dating partners: A dyadic concordance type approach. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(7–8), NP3981–NP4005. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520957688>
- 7 Straus, M. A. (2011). Gender symmetry and mutuality in perpetration of clinical-level partner violence: Empirical evidence and implications for prevention and treatment. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 16(4), 279–288. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2011.04.010>

Johnson, M. P. (2008). *A typology of domestic violence: Intimate terrorism, violent resistance and situation couple violence*. Northeastern University Press.

- 8 Ibid.

- 9 Ertl, A., Sheats, K. J., Petrosky, E., Betz, C. J., Yuan, K., & Fowler, K. A. (2019). Surveillance for violent deaths—national violent death reporting system, 32 states, 2016. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Surveillance Summaries*, 68(9), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss.6809a1>

- 10 Ibid.

- 11 Office on Women's Health. (2021, February 15). *Effects of domestic violence on children*. <https://www.womenshealth.gov/relationships-and-safety/domestic-violence/effects-domestic-violence-children>

There is a wealth of research on the impact of domestic violence on children. See Pingley, T. (2017). The impact of witnessing domestic violence on children: A systematic review. *Social Work Master's Clinical Research Papers*. 773. [https://ir.stthomas.edu/ssw\\_mstrp/773](https://ir.stthomas.edu/ssw_mstrp/773)

Meltzer, H., Doos, L., Vostanis, P., Ford, T., & Goodman, R. (2009). The mental health of children who witness domestic violence. *Child & Family Social Work*, 14(4), 491–501. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2009.00633.x>

Koenen, K. C., Moffitt, T. E., Caspi, A., Taylor, A., & Purcell, S. (2003). Domestic violence is associated with environmental suppression of IQ in young children. *Development and Psychopathology*, 15(2), 297–311. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0954579403000166>

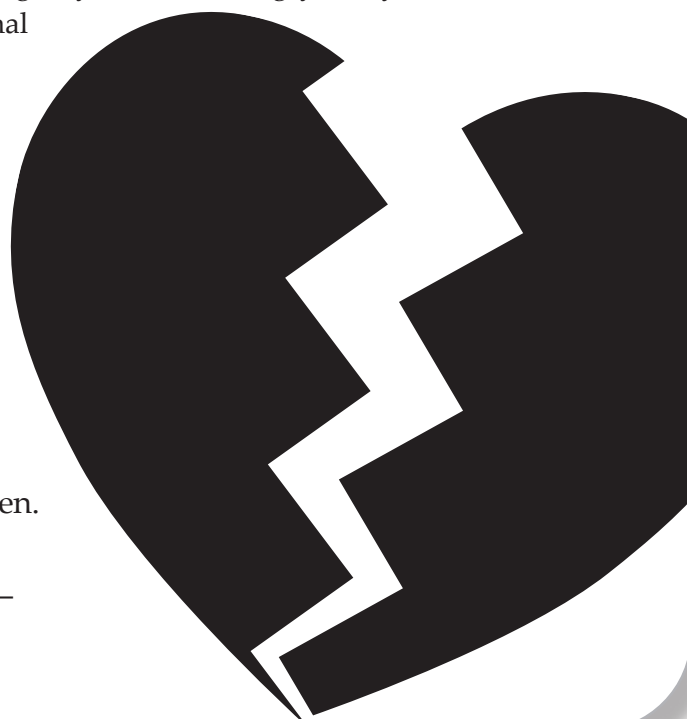
- 12 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, June 14). *Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs)*. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/index.html>

## Breakup Tips

1. **Talk to an adult you trust:** Go over the reasons it isn't working. Don't talk about it with friends that encourage drama or revenge. And if there are any concerns about your safety and how the person will react, ask a parent or trusted adult to assist you.
  2. **Pick a time and a private place and tell the person yourself:** Don't do it around their friends. Have the respect to do it face to face. But don't tell them right before a big event like a test, a game, a cultural event where they're performing, a birthday, or the start of the school day. A good time is on a Friday after school or a Saturday. You will both have time to start getting over it and talk to supportive friends and adults before school begins again. If you are worried whatsoever about your safety, do not pick a private place. Get help from a caring adult.
  3. **Make a clean break:** Don't beat around the bush or make empty promises. Be honest and direct, but not cruel. Do not give a mixed message. Say: "I want to break up." Or "I do not have the same feelings anymore." Remember, you do not have to argue or convince the person. Your feelings are your feelings.
  4. **Avoid cruelty:** Mention something you appreciated about them, if appropriate.
- **Caution:** If a person threatens to harm, or even kill, themselves if you break up, you must reach out for help. Their threat may make you feel guilty, scared, or angry, but you can and should still end things. Even though this is emotional blackmail to make you feel responsible and not break up, this threat has to be taken seriously. This is why you must reach out to parents—yours and theirs, a school counselor, or another caring adult for help in handling this. The national suicide crisis hotline is 1-800-273-8255. If there is immediate danger, call 911.

**Parent/Trusted Adult:** Discuss with your teen.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

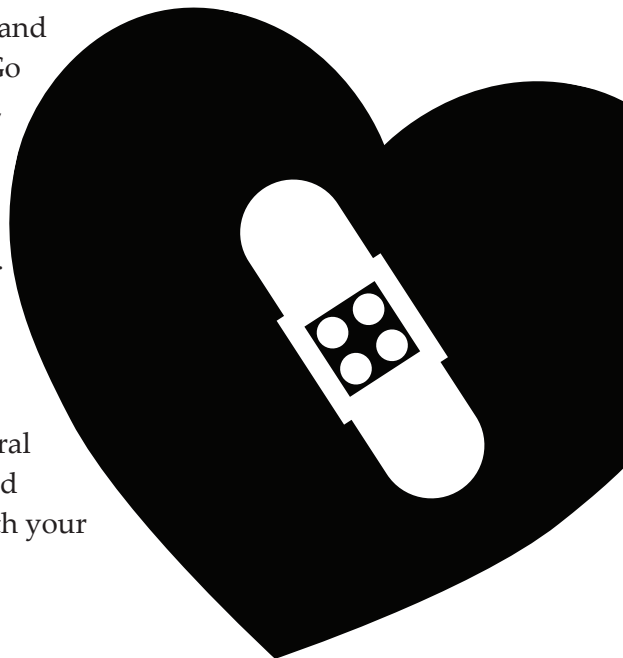


## Surviving a Breakup

1. **Face reality**, and don't be obsessed with winning this person back. You can't force a relationship. It sacrifices your dignity to beg for a relationship, act desperate, or try to chase the person. And you deserve to be in a relationship with someone who wants to be with you and likes you for who you are.
2. **Don't blame yourself.** There are lots and lots of reasons why relationships end. Make a list of your positive qualities. Work to make the changes you want. Ultimately, you want a relationship with someone who admires you, recognizes your qualities, is as crazy about you as you are about them, and accepts you as you truly are. Also, make a list of what you want in a partner. What qualities are you looking for, and what's important? What can you learn from this relationship?
3. **Stay away from the revenge game.** Forget about getting even or spreading rumors. It might be tempting, but it's immature and it can keep you from moving on after a breakup.
4. **Get perspective.** Most people go through more than one romance. This is a normal part of life. From a relationship that ends, you can grow wiser and more insightful about yourself, what you are looking for, and how relationships should be. Talking with a caring adult can give you some needed perspective.
5. **Beware of rebounding.** Don't hop into another relationship right away to make your ex jealous or to make yourself feel better. This is not a good idea at all. Give yourself time.
6. **Get busy.** When you are out of tears, get busy and get outside. Do things with friends or family. Go biking, swimming, jogging, skating, kick a ball, shoot baskets, or take walks. Make it a point to do something physical every day.
7. **Get going with life.** Call friends and make plans. Don't sit around feeling sorry for yourself.
8. **Remember, things get better with time.**
  - **Caution:** If you are depressed and crying several months later, seek out a parent, relative, trusted adult, or school counselor to help you deal with your emotions and gain perspective.

**Parent/Trusted Adult:** Discuss with your teen.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Instructor Discussion Tips for It Depends Cards

***One person tries to please the other person.***

**Discussion:** This can be positive if **both** partners engage in behaviors to please the other. Doing kind things for a partner is healthy. It would be a red flag if one person was doing all the pleasing or if there was a fear of being dumped or threatened if the partner wasn't pleased.

***The person you are going with wants to take the relationship to a sexual level. You do not want to add sex to your teen relationship.***

**Discussion:** It may be normal for a person to “want” to become sexual. It stays safe and normal if they respect your wishes—your boundaries. If the person won't let up the pressure, gets intimidating, or starts to bully, it has definitely crossed the line.

***We had an argument. We both got upset and yelled at each other.***

**Discussion:** Everybody has arguments from time to time, and most people have raised their voices. We're not perfect. But this would cross the line if arguments and yelling are a constant backdrop to the relationship or if they spill over into pushing and shoving.

***She got jealous when I talked to my old girlfriend.***

**Discussion:** It's pretty normal to get jealous, but it depends on what she does about it. Is she creating all sorts of drama around it? Accusing her of stuff she's not doing? Keeping constant tabs on her? That crosses the line.

***Lied to me and apologized.***

**Discussion:** Most of us could not say with an honest face that we have never lied. Maybe you didn't want to hurt the person's feelings. Maybe you are honestly sorry for a lie. It would take it over the line if the lying was habitual and the behavior didn't change. Apologies can get old in that case. It also might depend on what they lied about.

***My partner is worried about the influence one of my friends is having on me and doesn't want me to hang with them.***

**Discussion:** People can be worried when they see someone they care about going down a bad path. It's healthy to encourage those you care for to make positive changes. This situation might cross the line if this person just didn't like their friend, was trying to control and dictate who they can see or wants to monopolize all their time.

***I don't want others to know I'm in a relationship or indicate it on my social media.***

**Discussion:** Maybe this person is questioning or not ready to come out. This must be respected. It's no one else's right to decide when one comes out. On the other hand, let's say someone was just playing a person and enjoying “friends with benefits” for themselves yet knowing full well the other person believes they have something going—a relationship. That's a red flag of a user and manipulator.

## Worried about a Friend?

### Signs of a disrespectful or abusive relationship:

- Goes through partner's phone to check texts, social media.
- Keeps tabs 24/7. Texts constantly.
- Is belittled or made to feel stupid by partner.
- Slapped, pushed, or shoved by partner.
- Chooses partner's clothes.
- Is told who to associate with or what they can do.
- Is forced to do things against their wishes—including sex.
- Won't accept breaking up. Threatens to harm themselves.
- Seems afraid of partner.
- Partner seems overly suspicious and jealous.
- Friend seems overly worried about upsetting partner.
- Friend starts to make excuses as to why they can't go out.



### What can I say to my friend?

- You deserve better.
- It is not okay to treat someone this way—whether it's an insult, a slap, or hitting.
- Healthy relationships don't include that kind of behavior.
- I am afraid for your safety. I am here for you.
- By accepting the behavior, it can be interpreted as a green light to continue.
- If the aggressor is your friend, say clearly that it's not okay.
- If your friend has a child, tell them this can hurt the child.

### What can I do?

- Focus on your friend's strengths. Give encouragement that they are a person worthy of better treatment. Relationships don't have to be this way.
- Encourage your friend to end the relationship.
- Tell your friend who is the aggressor that there is help out there. They can be better.
- Encourage talking to an adult. Offer helpful websites below.
- Text, call a hotline for more advice on how to help your friend.
- Call the police if someone's safety is in danger.

Go to: [LoveIsRespect.org](http://LoveIsRespect.org). Text "loveis" to 22522. 24/7 helpline 1-866-331-9474

**Parent or Trusted Adult:** Discuss these points together.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sexual Assault and Consent

## A person cannot give legal consent to sexual activity or contact when:

- Threatened, forced, coerced, pressured, or manipulated into agreeing.
- Not physically able to (you are drunk, high, drugged, passed out).
- Not mentally able to (due to illness or disability).
- Younger than 16 (in most states) or 18 (in others).

## What is *not* considered consent in sexual assault?

- Silence: Just because someone does not say “no” doesn’t mean the person is saying “yes”.
- Having consented before: Just because someone said “yes” in the past does not mean the person is saying “yes” now.
- Being in a relationship and/or having had prior sexual contact with them before does not mean that there is consent now.
- Being drunk or high.
- Not fighting back: Not putting up a physical fight doesn’t mean consent.
- Sexy clothing, dancing, or flirting.



## Remember:

- Consent is an ongoing process. Saying yes to one activity (kissing, touching) does not imply consent to another activity.
- One can change their mind and choose to stop. You must stop instantly when consent is withdrawn.
- Saying yes to a sexual activity is not consent for all types of sexual activity.
- Consent is a two-way street. Boys, too, must voluntarily agree to physical intimacy and should not be subject to manipulation or pressure from girls or other guys. Everyone on the gender spectrum has a right to say no to unwanted advances.
- Consent applies to digital images, too. Forwarding or posting explicit photos/videos sent to you without permission from the sender is not consent. And if the person is under 18, it may be prosecuted under child pornography laws.
- A victim is never to blame for the actions of a perpetrator.

See [rainn.org](http://rainn.org) for more information and help 24/7.

**Parent/Trusted Adult:** Discuss the points with your teen.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

