

The Center for Family Safety and Healing

Preventing Abuse in Teen Relationships

What Caregivers Need to Know



Remember when...

What was dating like in your
high school?



TEN STEPS TO SUPPORTING HEALTHY TEEN RELATIONSHIPS



STEP ONE:

Understand the pressures of teen dating relationships.



Teen Relationship Pressures

- Teens have limited prior relationship experiences and may not know how to identify healthy relationships.
- Teens are highly influenced by norms among their peer groups.



Teen Relationship Pressures

- Adults may lack an understanding of the dynamics of unhealthy relationships and may not know how to support teens in unhealthy/abusive relationships.
- Technology is extremely integrated into many teens' lives and may be used against a dating partner.



STEP TWO:

Encourage and model healthy and safe relationships. Communicate family values and expectations.



Key Aspects of Healthy Teen Relationships

- Comfortable Pace
 - Trust
 - Honesty
 - Independence
 - Respect
-



Key Aspects of Healthy Teen Relationships

- Equality
- Compassion
- Taking Responsibility for Actions
- Healthy Communication



Shared Vision

Shared Vision unites relational frames of language and thought – putting everyone on the same page and eliminating misunderstandings.



Shared Vision

1. Predict the positive steps and outcomes of the upcoming activity.
 2. Establish what we would like to see, hear, do and feel more.
 3. Establish what we would like to see, hear, do and feel less.
 4. Allow young people to drive the conversation but offer guidance.
 5. Ensure the more ***outnumbers*** the less.
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STEP THREE:

**Know how to define teen dating
abuse.**



Over 80% of parents believe that teen dating abuse is not an issue or admit they don't know if it's an issue.

A majority of parents (58%) could not correctly identify all of the warning signs.

<https://www.breakthecycle.org/dating-violence-research>



What is **Teen Dating Abuse**?

Abuse is about...

Power & Control

... A pattern of behaviors where one partner acts to obtain & maintain power & control over the other partner



Teen Dating Abuse (TDA) impacts adolescents from every zip code, income level, race, religion and nationality.

1 in 3 adolescents in the U.S. is a victim of TDA, a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence.



Types of Abusive Behaviors

Type	Examples
Coercive control	Isolation from friends and family, lack of agency
Verbal	Humiliation, insults, put downs, constant blaming or yelling...
Psychological/Emotional	Jealousy, gas-lighting, threats, intimidation...
Sexual	Pressure/engage in sexual act without consent, threats/rumors if partner refuses...
Physical	Hitting, slapping, punching, pinching, shoving...
Digital	Pressure for nude images, excessive or unwanted texts, access to device/account without permission...



STEP FOUR:

**Learn the warning signs for
unhealthy or abusive relationships.**



Warning Signs of an Abusive Teen

- Exhibit a controlling attitude toward their partner or others
 - “They aren’t allowed to wear leggings or that shirt. They represent me in school.”
 - Believe that abusive behaviors are acceptable/normal
 - “Everyone looks through their partner’s account. I didn’t hit them.”
 - Rationalize their monitoring, controlling, manipulative, violent or abusive behavior
 - “It’s my right to treat my partner this way. It’s because I love them so much. I’m just a jealous person.”
 - Make excessive and/or unwanted texts, calls or emails to the same person
 - “You better check in with me or else. You have 15 minutes to text me back...”
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Warning Signs of an Abused Teen

- Retreat from school or activities and experience isolation or withdraw from friends/family
 - “I’m just not into sports anymore. I don’t know why my grades are dropping.”
- Making changes in clothing/appearance
 - Stops/starts wearing makeup or wears clothes to hide injuries
- Exhibit anxiety/hypervigilance, depression, or engage in substance abuse or other high risk behaviors
- Receive excessive or unwanted texting, calls, or emails
 - “I’m not going to put my phone away!”



STEP FIVE:

Be aware of your teen's use of technology, including in relationships.



FORMS OF DIGITAL ABUSE

Used my social networking account without permission



Created a profile page about me, knowing it would upset me



Wrote nasty things about me on his or her profile page



Posted embarrassing photos of me online



Used information from my online profile to harass me



Made me feel afraid when I did not respond to calls or texts



Threatened, by text, to harm me physically



Sent me so many messages that I felt unsafe



Spread rumors about me online or through texts



Sent threatening text messages, IMs, or chats that made me feel scared



Pressured and threatened me to send a sexual photo of myself



Took video of me and sent it to friends without my permission

Sent me unwanted sexual photos and messages to engage in sexual acts



Teens reported equal rates of digital monitoring and control as well as digital direct aggression.

However, girls reported more frequent digital sexual coercion victimization and more **negative emotional responses**.



There is limited data on TDA in the LGBTQ youth community but existing data shows significantly higher rates among LGB youth.

Teens who report digital abuse and harassment from a dating partner:

- 26% of heterosexual youth
- 37% of LGB youth
- 56% of trans youth



STEP SIX:

Create a family media agreement.





[commonsense.org](https://www.commonsense.org)



STEP SEVEN:

Support your teen's decisions. Do not force your teen to break up with their dating partner.



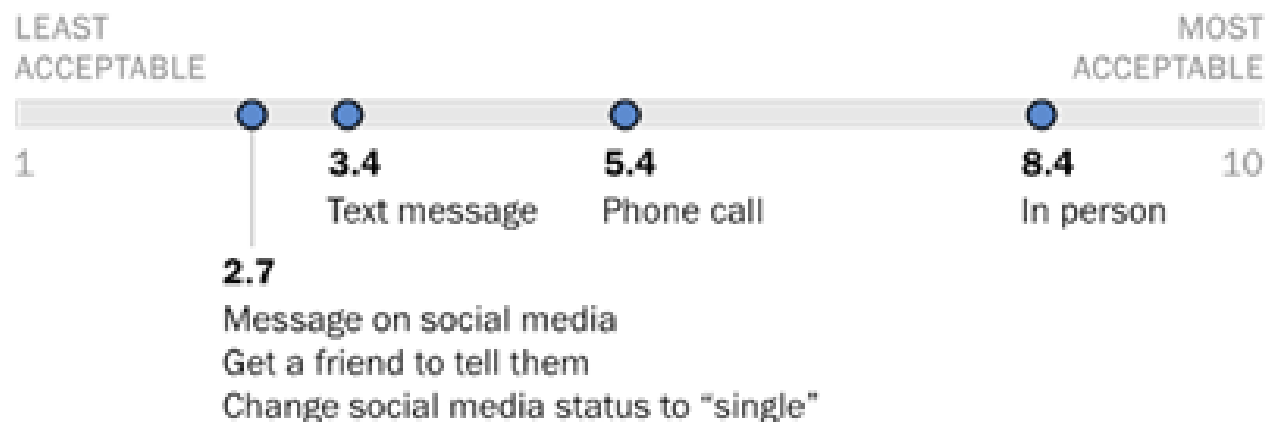
There are many reasons why teens might stay in an abusive relationships:

- “This is my normal.”
 - Love of their partner
 - Fear of their partner
 - Status and/or low self-esteem
 - Safety concerns
-



Breaking Up In Person Is Most Socially Acceptable Method

On a scale from 1 to 10, teens' average rank of the acceptability of each breakup method



Source: Pew Research Center Teens Relationships Survey, Sept. 25-Oct. 9, 2014, and Feb. 10-March 16, 2015 (n=1,060 teens ages 13 to 17).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



The most dangerous time for a victim in an abusive relationship is when the relationship is ending.

Safety planning is critical to **reduce isolation** and **increase safety**.



STEP EIGHT:

**Decrease isolation for teens by
creating a safe space to talk.**



Teens are more likely to discuss their relationships with peers than teachers/parents.

Only 33% of teens who were in a violent relationship ever told anyone about the abuse while it was occurring.



Our Role

- Respectful **Mentoring**
- Build **Support Network**
- Offer **Empowered Decision-making**



**Increase
Safety**

**Decrease
Isolation**



Tips for Talking with Teens

- Do you feel safe in your relationship?
 - Do you feel comfortable disagreeing with them?
 - Do you feel like you can spend time with your friends?
 - Do you have to share your passwords with them?
 - I believe you.
 - We care about you. It's not your fault. I appreciate the courage it takes to tell me.
-



Reflect, Honor, Connect

Reflect back, with compassion, what you heard

- “I can see that you’re upset. I hear you saying that you are not being treated with respect by your partner.”



Reflect, Honor, Connect

Honor their courage for surviving and sharing

- *“Thank you for sharing your feelings with me. I know it can be difficult to talk about something that is painful.”*



Reflect, Honor, Connect

Connect them with safety, supports and what they would like the future to look like.

- *“I’m wondering if there is something I can do to help you feel safe right now?”*



STEP NINE:

Increase safety by developing a safety plan.



Safety Planning

- What I'm seeing/hearing makes me concerned for your safety.
 - You may be afraid the abuse will get worse if you tell someone. But it is actually likely to get worse over time on its own; being alone in this increases danger for you.
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loveisrespect.org



A TEEN'S
**GUIDE TO
SAFETY
PLANNING**

If you have questions about dating in general or a specific relationship, or if you are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, you deserve support and resources to help you with your situation. You are not alone; our peer advocates are here for you 24/7.

Loveisrespect advocates are trained on issues related to dating abuse and healthy relationships, as well as crisis intervention. This means that when you contact a loveisrespect advocate, they will listen to your situation, assess how you're feeling in the moment, and help you figure out the next best steps for you. You might brainstorm a safety plan together, or the advocate may be able to find some local resources for you, whether it's a counselor, support group, legal service or whatever you might need.



CALL
1-866-331-9474
(1-866-331-8453 TTY for Deaf/hard of hearing individuals)



Students in abusive relationships most often tell a friend...

What would
you do to help?



Learn more and
download the free app
myPlanApp.org

 **myPlan**
Decide What's Safe

endtechabuse.org

CYBER SAFETY PLAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS:



What is a safety plan?
Things I can do to keep myself safe
My personal resources
Reporting abuse online



STEP TEN:

Know your local, state and national resources.



WHERE'S THE LINE?

Not sure if it's abuse?

**Get confidential
answers and advice:**



Call 844-234-LINE



Text 87028



**Chat with us
WheresTheLine.info**

thatsnotcool.com

THATS NOT COOL.COM

ADULT ALLIES

Welcome to the That's Not Cool Adult Allies section! On these pages, you can download many of the That's Not Cool campaign materials, including creative files for our TV and print PSAs, information about the research we've conducted, and tips on social media outreach. Use the categories below to find the files you need to bring That's Not Cool to your community!

SOCIAL HUB

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FEATURED TOOLS

[Learn](#) [Teach](#) [Organize](#) [Engage](#) [Help](#)



Community Resources

The Center for Family Safety and Healing

(614) 722-8200

www.FamilySafetyandhealing.org

Ohio Domestic Violence Network

(614) 781-9651

www.odvn.org

Huckleberry House

(614) 294-5553

www.huckhouse.org

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

(866) 331-9474

Text “loveis” to 22522