

Healthy Relationships

for teens

Relationships are difficult & take time to get right!

Presented by:

Developed by Prevention & Promotion
Mental Health & Addiction Services, Western Health

Types of Relationships

- **Family** (siblings, parents, extended family)
- **Friends**
- **Romantic** (boyfriend/girlfriend)
- **Casual:**
 - **Professional** (such as teachers, clergy or medical professionals)
 - **Acquaintances** (such as people you know & recognize in passing)



Relationships are difficult & take time to get right!

Why are Healthy Relationships Important?

- We engage with many people in our daily lives. It is helpful when we can form meaningful relationships with those people.
- Being in a good relationship helps us:
 - Know ourselves
 - Develop as a person
 - Grow emotionally
 - Communicate & maintain meaningful bonds with other people
 - Enjoy life & have fun!



What Makes a Healthy Relationship?

- **Respect**
- **Trust**
- **Honesty**
- **Communication**



Healthy Vs. Unhealthy Relationships

Healthy Relationships	Unhealthy Relationships
You feel good about yourself when you're around the other person.	You feel sad, angry, scared or worried.
You do not try to restrict or control each other. There is equal amount of give & take.	You feel you are giving more attention than they give to you. You feel restricted & controlled.
Communication, Sharing & Trust. You feel safe & trust to share secrets. It requires listening.	You do not communicate, share & trust.
You like to spend time together but also enjoy doing things apart.	You feel pressured to spend time together & feel guilty when apart.
It's easy to be yourself when you're with the other person.	You feel the need to be someone or something that you're not.
You Respect each other's opinion. You listen & try to understand their point of view even if you disagree.	You feel there's no respect for you & your opinion & you're not able to disagree.
There is <u>no fear</u> in your relationship.	You feel fear. Alcohol &/or drugs may cause arguing, physical, emotional, sexual abuse &/or unprotected sexual activity.

Activity - Characteristics of a Healthy or Unhealthy Relationship

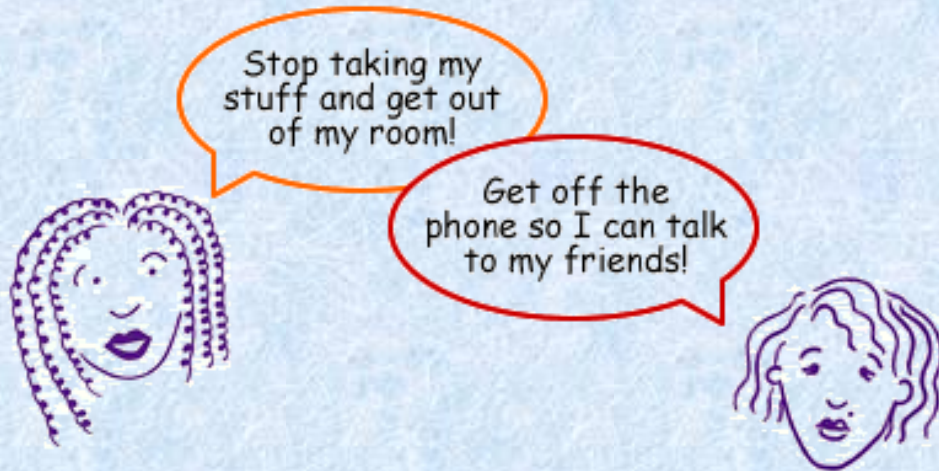
The Media & Relationships

- Exposure
 - How are relationships portrayed in the media?
- Facts
 - Most relationships on TV are superficial, short term & “easy.”
 - Out of the TV shows that contain overt sexual content, only 15% discuss risk & responsibility.

Respect:

You have to give it to get it!

- Everyone deserves respect.
- Trust & support each other
- Value each other's independence
- Have the freedom to be yourself
- Talk honestly



Being Respectful

- Respect each person as an individual. A healthy partnership means learning about the other person & valuing what's important to them.
- Respect in a relationship means that each person values the other & understands – & would never challenge – the other person's boundaries.
- Respect yourself
- Show respect with your words & actions

***Activity – Show Respect
or Circle or Respect***



Trust

- **Trust** - Means that you feel that you can count on each other & that the other person will be there for you. Trust needs to be earned over time & can be lost with a broken promise.
- Proving you are reliable and responsible
- What happens in a relationship without trust?
 - Second guessing
 - Not believing each other
 - Betrayal by sharing secrets
 - Obsessively checking on the person
- Being honest helps gain & maintain trust.
- Trust is essential in a healthy relationship



Honesty

- Be **Honest** about thoughts & feelings. It is the “real me” that our partner wants to get to know.
- Honesty goes hand-in-hand with trust.
- It’s hard to trust or believe someone when they have lied in the past. Once someone has been dishonest, it takes time to regain trust in a relationship.



Communication

- **Communication** - Is how we show our respect, trust & honesty & it requires listening & sharing thoughts & feelings.
- Being able to talk & listen to each other.
- It is based on honesty & trust.



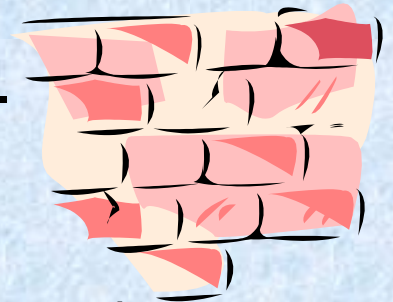
Communicating – Body Language and Tone



- Body language & tone can express more than words!
- Activity: Using Body Language

Boundaries

- It is your responsibility to establish & enforce your own boundaries. Tell people your boundaries.
- Types of boundaries:
 - **Physical** – This is your personal space.
 - **Sexual** - We define our limits on what is safe & appropriate sexual behaviour.
 - **Emotional** – This is your feelings & reactions & is defined by what you feel is safe & appropriate ways for people to treat you.
 - **Relational** - Parent, partner, friend, colleague, acquaintance, boss, etc. Roles & context define the limits of appropriate interactions. Each relationship has different boundaries.
- Understand & honor boundaries.
- Understand when boundaries can/cannot be crossed – duty to report.



Evaluating Friendships

Some people we spend time with give us energy while others may be draining.

- Think about the people in your life, do they energize you or drain you?
- Is there respect, trust, honesty & communication?
- Is this a real friendship
- Is the friendship worth it?
- Is this a healthy friendship?

Activity - Ad for a Friend

When Something's Wrong...

Using drugs & alcohol can interfere with building the key components of a healthy relationship:

- **Respect**
- **Communication**
- **Trust**
- **Honesty**

How do you think drugs & alcohol can affect your relationships?



What is an Unhealthy Relationship?



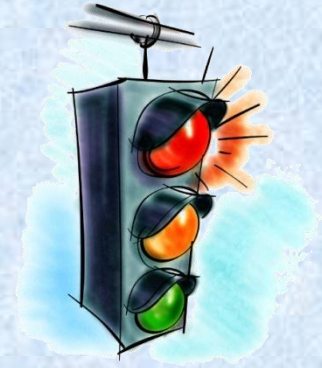
- An unhealthy relationship may include:
 - Teasing or bullying
 - Power struggles
 - Angry outbursts
 - Withholding love
 - Coercion or peer pressure
 - Unreasonable demands
 - Humiliation

A Healthy Relationship NEVER includes these things!

Red Lights

Does the other person...?

- Put you down
- Get extremely jealous or possessive
- Constantly check up on you
- Tell you how to dress
- Try to control what you do & who you see
- Have big mood swings
- Make you feel nervous (like you are walking on eggshells)
- Criticize you
- Threaten to hurt you



Activity – Friendship Spotlight Game

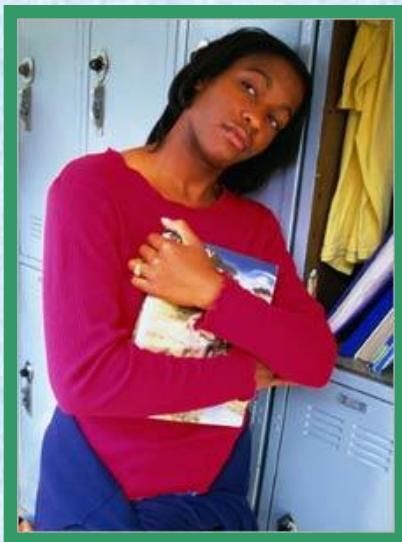
Danger Signs



- Not talking & avoiding problems
- Lack of trust, respect, honesty & communication
- Lack of balance/Trying to control you
- Pressuring you to make the relationship serious
- Pressuring you to have sex
- Extreme jealousy & possessiveness
- Not taking your views or desires seriously
- Trying to stop you from spending time with friends/family
- Having abused a previous partner
- Defending the use of violence by others

Sexuality

- Is your romantic relationship ready for sex?



Things to consider:

- Are you **aware** of your options & the consequences of being sexual active? (ex: STI's, pregnancy)
- Are you **balancing** all aspects of your life in your decision, including your present desires & future goals?
- Make a conscious **choice**.

Relationship Violence

- Females are most often the victims of abuse - 95% of all victims in an abusive relationship are women
- 1/4 of high school students experience dating violence
- 40% of females murdered in Canada are killed by their partners
- Over 70% of pregnant/parenting teens are beaten by their boyfriends
- Dating violence is an indicator of future abuse
- Jealousy & possessiveness are tools used to take control

***Remember...It is not the victim's fault.
Nobody deserves to be abused.***



STOP
Relationship Violence

Cycle of Violence

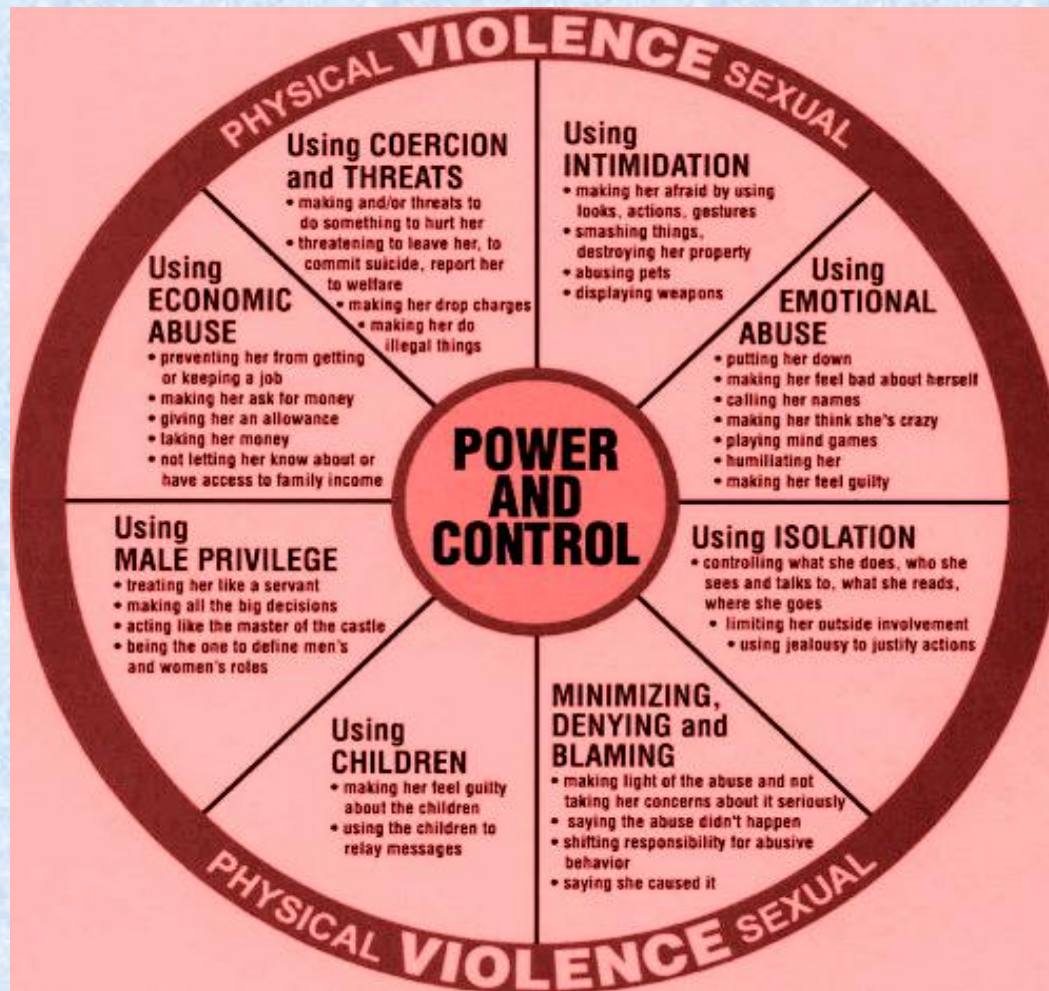


- **Tension Building** Criticism, yelling, swearing, angry gestures, coercion or threats
- **Explosion/Violence** Physical & sexual attacks or threats
- **Calm/Seduction** Apologies, promises to change or gifts

What keeps the cycle in motion?

- **Love for the abuser:** Believing that the relationship is not entirely bad
- **Hope:** Thinking things will change or it's just a phase
- **Fear:** Worrying that threats will become a reality & so are afraid to end the relationship

Power & Control Wheel



Myths of Dating Violence

- “He/she will never do it again.”
- “I am not being abused.”
- “I will leave when the time is right.”
- “It only happens to girls.”

***Activity - Myth or Fact Domestic Violence
& Teen Relationship Abuse***



Relationship Violence: Crossing the Line Activity

Size

Gender

Friends

Interests

Clothing

Brains/Grades

Helping a Friend

– Warning Signs



- Is your friend:
 - Becoming more isolated from family & friends?
 - Not participating in activities he/she formerly enjoyed?
 - Spending an excessive amount of time with the other person?
 - Displaying physical & emotional signs of abuse?
 - Constantly canceling plans for reasons that don't sound true?
 - Always worry about making their boy/girlfriend angry?
 - Give up things that are important?
 - Tell you that they get pressured into having sex, or talk about feeling like a sex object?
 - Have a boy/girlfriend that wants them to be available all the time?

If the answer is “yes” to many of these questions, your friend could be in an abusive relationship.

Helping a Friend

Deal with an Unhealthy Relationship

- Help them to recognize that feeling bad about themselves is not "normal" & that they deserve a healthy, non-violent relationship.
- Be a good listener & offer support.
- Offer to go with them to find a counselor or support group, or to talk to someone they trust like their family, friends, guidance counsellor, teacher or nurse.
- Encourage them to find strength & be brave.
- Don't make them feel bad for their choices - even if you think these choices are wrong.
- Be patient, it can take time for your friend to make changes.
- Remember that you cannot "rescue" them.



What Should You Do?

- In an unhealthy relationship, you can:
 - Work it out
 - End the relationship
- If you are being abused:
 - Tell someone about the abuse.
 - Talk to your partner & explain that you will leave if the abuse don't stop.
- If you are abusing:
 - Talk to a friend, counsellor or someone you trust. Abuse is a learned behaviour & you can change it!
- If you're in a relationship that you feel you can't get out of, try talking to someone you trust & who may be in a position to help!



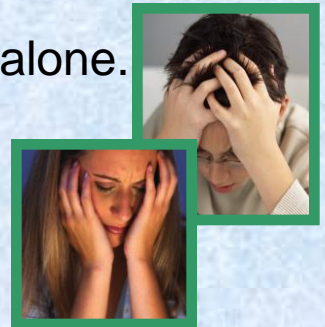


Coping with a Break Up

Understanding & accepting that a relationship is over can be tough. You might feel sad, angry, confused, lonely, embarrassed & like you'll never find love again – That's Normal!

There's no magic cure for a broken heart, here's ways to help you cope:

- **Keep busy.** Get involved in different activities. Focusing on other things can help you move on with your life, meet new people & discover new interests.
- **Focus on your good qualities.** It's easy to feel discouraged. Be kind to yourself. Remember your good points. Are you a good friend or talented athlete? Do you have nice eyes or a great smile?
- **Give yourself time to heal.** It may take a few days, weeks or even take months. It's normal to feel like you won't ever get over it. Recovering from a break up isn't easy so give yourself time.
- **Talk about it.** Sharing with others can help you feel like you're not alone.
- **Write about it.** Putting your thoughts on paper is a safe & private way to cope with stress.



Resources

If you feel you or a friend is in an unhealthy relationship, talk to someone you trust like your guidance counsellor, school nurse, parents, doctor/health care provider or contact your local **Mental Health & Addiction Services Office.**

Mental Health Crisis Line	1-888-737-4668
Kids Help Line	1-800-668-6868
Health Line	1-888-709-2929
Transition House	1 866 634 4198
Sexual Assault Line	1-800-726-2743
RCMP	1-800-709-RCMP
RNC	1-800-363-4334
NL Sexual Health Centre	1-877-666-9847
Aids Committee NL	1-800-563-1575

Questions?



Presenter Name
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