

Activity 1: Rights, Respect, Responsibility

9-12 Health

Is it abuse if?

There are a lot of myths out there about sexuality and relationships – particularly as it relates to teens. One myth is that relationship abuse doesn't happen in teen relationships. That's what we're going to talk about today. Actually, statistics show that relationship abuse of all kinds is as prevalent in teen relationships as it is in adult relationships. Often, people can't always tell whether their relationship is abusive or whether they're just going through a rough time with a partner. We're going to figure that out today, along with what to do when you realize you're in an unhealthy or abusive relationship.

There are a number of different categories of relationship abuse: Physical, Emotional, Psychological, Sexual and Financial:

- Physical abuse is exactly what it sounds like – hurting someone physically in some way.
- Emotional abuse is making someone feel bad about themselves by taking away their sense of self or self-esteem.
- Psychological abuse is using threats or intimidation to frighten someone or make them feel like they're losing touch with reality. Sexual abuse is similar to physical abuse, although the abuse is sexual in nature.
- Financial abuse is when the finances in a relationship – or a person's potential to earn or have money – are controlled by one person.

Some Examples of how these types of abuses show up are:

PHYSICAL: Hitting, Kicking, Slapping, Punching, Pinching, Restraining, Choking, Blocking their way.

EMOTIONAL: Criticizing the person's appearance or intelligence, telling the person that no one else would ever want to be with them, flirting with other people in front of the person, using what they know makes the other person feel vulnerable in an attempt to make them feel worse, sharing sexy photos of the other person without their consent.

PSYCHOLOGICAL Threatening to hurt the other person, threatening to hurt people they know or care about (or pets), texting nonstop and expecting the other person to text back by a certain time, threatening to hurt yourself if the other person doesn't do what you want, or spreading rumors about the person.

SEXUAL Rape, forcing the other person to do anything sexual they don't want to do, making the other person watch porn, sharing sexy photos of the other person without their consent, or refusing to practice safer sex.

FINANCIAL Controlling the money in the relationship, stealing from the other person, telling the other person they need to spend time with you instead of going to work, keeping the other person from going to or finishing school, which limits their ability to earn money.

Activity: Is It Abuse If...?

1. ... a couple is arguing and when one partner begins to freak out the other gives them a light slap to calm them down?

YES

NO

Comments:

2. ... a person walks their partner to school every morning, meets them for lunch every day, and picks them up at the end of each afternoon?

YES

NO

Comments:

3. ... every time a same-sex couple argues, one of the partners threatens to "out" the other to their family?

YES

NO

Comments:

4. ... an 18-year-old has sex with a 14-year-old?

YES

NO

Comments:

5. ... a couple starts “play-fighting” and they wrestle around on the floor resulting in bruises on one of their arms?

YES

NO

Comments:

6. ... one partner says they want to have sex. Their partner says they're not ready, but after talking about it, gives in and has sex anyway, even though they really don't want to?

YES

NO

Comments: