



HEALTHY TEEN DATING RELATIONSHIPS

STEPS FOR HELPING YOUR TEENS FORM HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

1 UNDERSTAND THE PRESSURES OF TEEN DATING

- Teens rely on their peers for advice about relationships (usually not their parents or other adults). Most teens have limited experience with healthy relationships so they're not in an ideal position to give advice
- Discuss how the relationships you and your child are exposed to (at school, on social media, YouTube, TV, movies, books, songs, etc.) influence expectations and desires for romantic relationships



Follow Media Fluency Lab on Instagram for more tips.

2 ENCOURAGE HEALTHY, SAFE RELATIONSHIPS - COMMUNICATE FAMILY VALUES & EXPECTATIONS

- Emphasize and model attributes of healthy relationships: independence, trust, respect, equality, consent, etc.
- Have open conversations with you children to gauge their expectations and values regarding relationships
 - Teens: Ask open-ended questions about movies, T.V. shows, podcasts, video games, YouTube influencers, books, etc.
 - Younger Children: encourage them to set boundaries in peer relationships (also see separate video on boundaries)

3 KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF TEEN DATING ABUSE

- **Abuse** is when one partner attempts to obtain and maintain power and control over another partner
 - 1 in 3 teens have experienced teen dating violence
 - **Warning Signs of Dating Abuse:**
 - Restricting choice and dictating behaviors
 - Controlling what someone wears, who they hang out with, or forcing them to share passwords, etc.
 - Rationalization of toxic behavior
 - Shifting blame, failing to take responsibility for harmful actions, gaslighting, etc.
- Abuser**
- Withdrawal from activities they used to enjoy
 - Intense emotional reactions to taking phones away
- Victim**

4 RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN YOUR CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP

- **Digital Dating Abuse** is harassment, bullying, stalking, and/or control of a partner via technology
 - Teens are experiencing online abuse primarily at the hands of their peers
- Rates of digital abuse are even higher for LGBTQIA+ teens
- Remind your teens of their digital rights and talk about how to set boundaries on the internet



5 SUPPORT SAFETY FOR YOUR TEEN

- Have open conversations with your teenagers about their relationships
 - If you suspect or know your child is being abused by their partner or peer:
 - Remind them they are worthy of a healthy and happy relationship
 - Explain that those who are abused are not at fault for their own mistreatment
 - Remind them they didn't do anything wrong, and they didn't do anything to deserve this poor treatment
 - Give them room for self-reflection
- Acknowledge your biases and monitor your judgement
 - If your teenager senses you are judging them, they will refrain from telling you about any abuse they experience, and they won't ask you for help navigating the abusive relationship
 - Show your teen that your love and support is unconditional
 - As a parent, reflect on your own relationships and behaviors
 - It's okay to still be learning about and working towards healthy relationships in your own life
- Collaborate with your teen to create a safety plan
 - If your child goes to the same school as their partner/abuser, consider getting the school counselors involved since they can rearrange your child's schedule to best help avoid the abusive ex-partner
 - Tell your teen to make sure they can be seen and heard by other people if they are forced to interact with their abusers at school or elsewhere



RESOURCES

BOUNDARIES & CONSENT

That's Not Cool (age-appropriate what-if scenarios great conversation starters for consent and boundaries)

ThatsNotCool.com

Consent Tea Analogy Video:

<https://vimeo.com/128105683> (2:57)

Consent Bicycle Analogy Video:

<https://youtu.be/-JwKjRaUaw> (3:50)

Planned Parenthood Consent Video:

<https://youtu.be/qNN3nAevQKY?list=PL3xP1jlf1jgJkChwVOlwQcV0-UqcWiFV> (3:50)

DIGITAL SAFETY

TikTok Safety Tips:

www.tiktok.com/safety/en/well-being

CommonSense Media: articles, research, and a Family Toolkit to help design a digital contract
www.commonsensemedia.org

Digital Wellbeing & Screen Time Resources:

there are a variety of apps (for Apple & Android) designed to achieve digital balance with teens

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

No More

nomore.org/learn

National Sexual Violence Resource Center

Search "Bystander Intervention Resources" for a variety of resources including a comprehensive information packet

Sounds Good Podcast

Search for the interview with Right To Be (formerly Hollaback) Founder Emily May on the importance of bystander intervention and having hope for a violence-free future

Don't Stand By spoken word poetry video about stepping in and interrupting violence
https://youtu.be/_sDF-mPHfLs (3:38)

HEALTHY MASCULINITY

The Man Box: featuring Tony Porter
https://youtu.be/I-IB_xjpQho (2:20)

Charlie Coleman Talks About Rape Culture with Teen Vogue:

https://youtu.be/VzC_Ss5oO4Q (2:42)

Sexual Assault Response Network of Central Ohio (SARNCO):

- 24/7 SARNCO Helpline: (614) 267.7020
- SARNCO Business Phone Line: (614) 566.4414

The Center for Family Safety and Healing: www.familysafetyandhealing.org

The Ohio Domestic Violence Network: www.odvn.org

OHMAN: www.ohman-ohio.org

Special thanks
to the Central
Ohio Well
Being Network