



B U I L D E R S

Preparing. Protecting. Empowering.™

Building Healthy Relationships Relationship Smarts PLUS

Amanda Siroosian, MPH



Relationships
Today Are
Like...

Main Points

Assertiveness

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

Dating Violence

Relationships and Media

Statistics

- In 2013, 34 percent of high school students reported being sexually active. *(<http://www.childtrends.org>)*

- The majority of sexually experienced teens wished they'd waited. Almost 7 in 10 girls and 5 in 10 boys.

(CDC, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2012)

- One in four girls and one in six boys have been sexually abused by the time they are eighteen.

(The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2009)

Statistics

- 9.4 percent of high school students report being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend in the 12 months before the survey.
- 20.1% of students had been bullied on school property and 16.2% of students had been electronically bullied during the 12 months before the survey.

(CDC Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2012)

Dating Violence Policies

(TEC Section 37.0831-2007)

(a) Each school district shall adopt and implement a dating violence policy to be included in the district improvement plan under Section 11.252.

(b) A dating violence policy must:

(1) include a definition of dating violence that includes the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a dating relationship, as defined by Section 71.0021, Family Code; and

(2) address safety planning, enforcement of protective orders, school-based alternatives to protective orders, trainings for teachers and administrators, counseling for affected students, and awareness education for students and parents.



Good
Relationships
Start With...

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS START WITH YOU

- What are my strengths? Have I set goals?
- Am I working towards the person I want to be?
- The more a person takes their own growth and development seriously—the healthier he or she is—the more likely they are to have good relationships and be more successful in life.





What are three
different
communication
styles in any
relationship?

Three Styles of Communication

Passive

- Disrespects self

Aggressive

- Disrespects others

Assertive

- Respect for self and others

Assertiveness

“When children use assertiveness skills, they behave in a way that demands respect by asking for what they need, saying “no” when they are uncomfortable, getting help when they need it, and confidently standing up for their rights and the rights of others.”

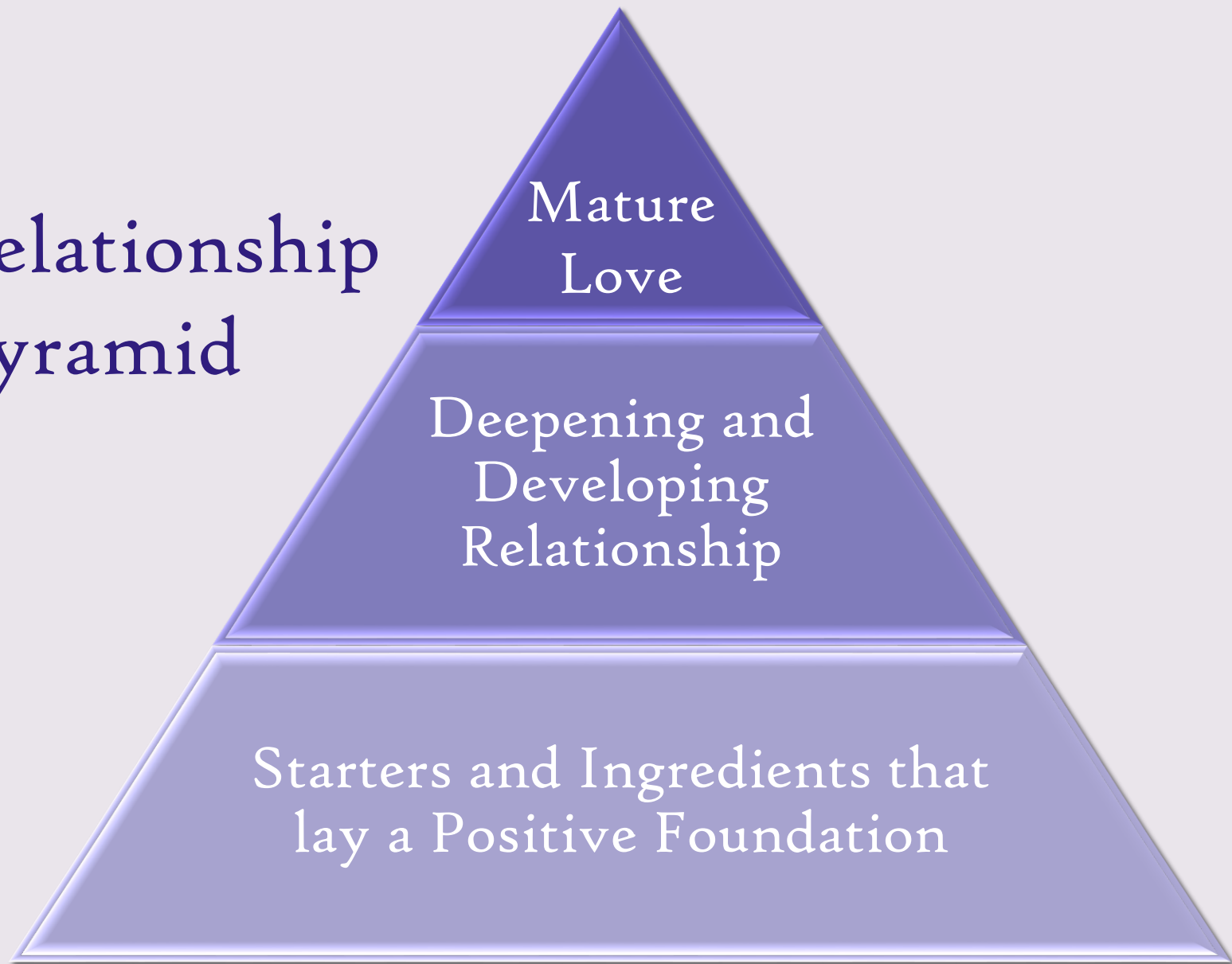
Davies, 2007



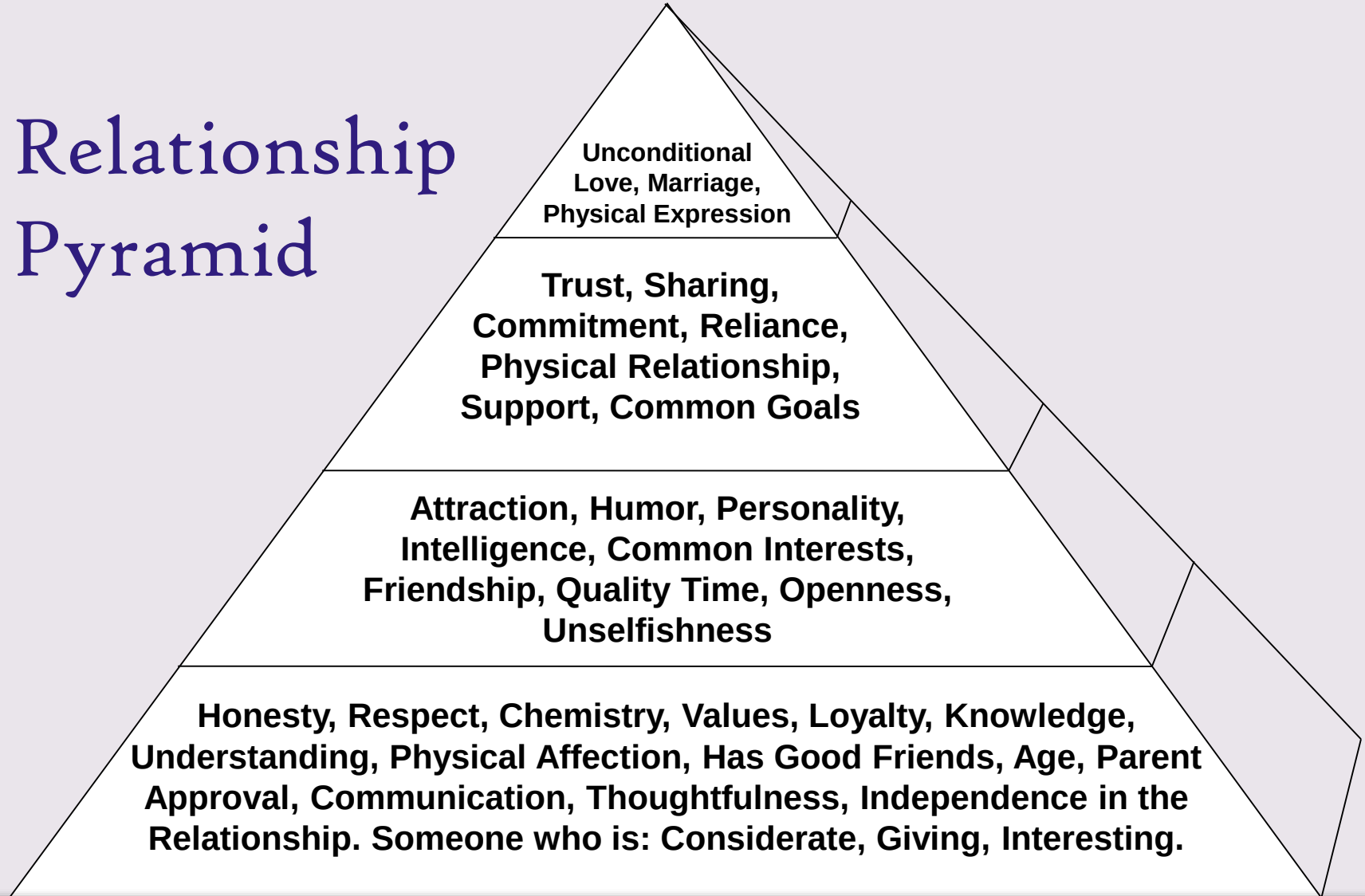
What Makes a Great Relationship?



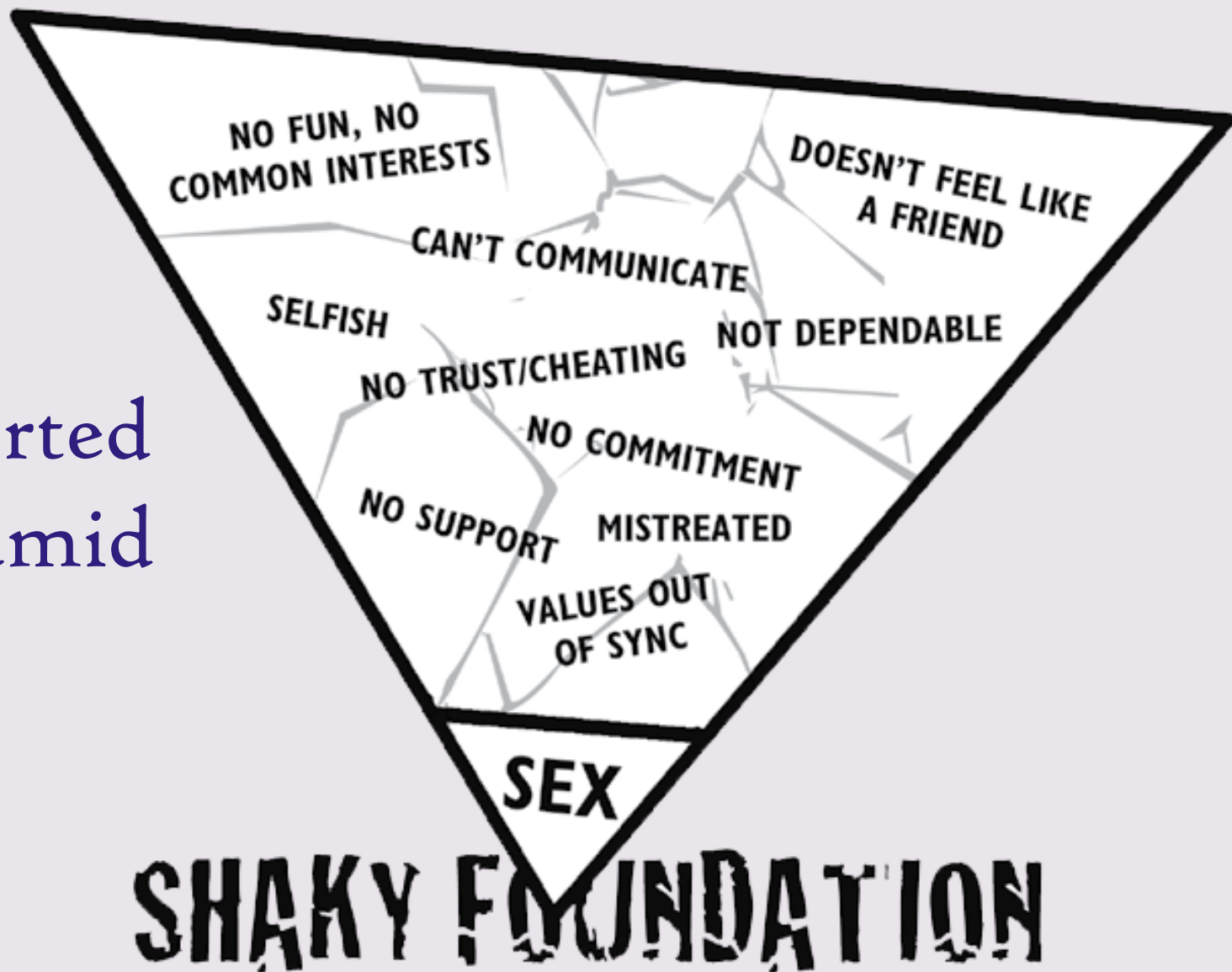
Relationship Pyramid



Relationship Pyramid



Inverted Pyramid



The Brain Chemistry of Love



For up to **9 months** you receive a big shot of the “love chemicals.” Enjoy the great feelings....but remember you won’t see clearly until those chemicals settle down a bit.









7 Principles for *Smart* Relationships

1. Seek a good match
2. Pay attention to values
3. Don't try to change a person into someone he or she is not
4. Don't try to change yourself just to get someone's love or friendship
5. Expect good communication.
6. Don't play games, be fake use or pressure someone
7. Expect Respect-Have standards for what to expect



Smart or Not-so-Smart?



Three Sides of Love



Chemistry

Friendship

Three Sides
of Love

Trust/Commitment



Which Side is Missing?

When Tom and Mary were 19 years old they fell in love practically at first sight. They were magically drawn to each other and couldn't bear to be apart. They quickly got sexually involved and within two weeks had moved in with each other. A month later they eloped. A year and a half later they discovered they really weren't very compatible. They had totally different interests and values. They were not good friends, their communication wasn't very good and they didn't have much fun anymore.



Is It a Healthy Relationship?

3 Questions

Is it Controlling?

OR

Equal & Supportive?

Is it Conditional?

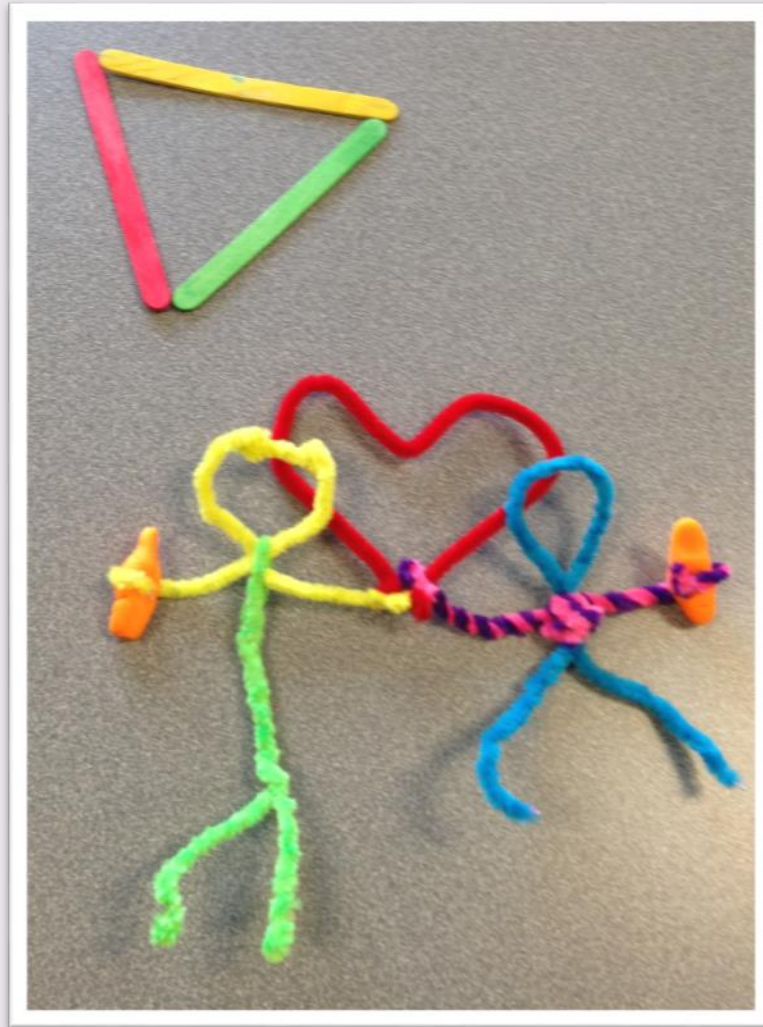
OR

Unconditional?

Is it mostly about sex or money? OR

Is the attraction on many levels?





High Risk Sliding Approach

Attraction 	Slide in	Then, Learn More about Each Other	Risks & High-Cost Consequences
Exciting	Rapid romantic or sexual involvement	Not compatible Different values Personalities don't mix Worse, discover problem behaviors Can't communicate Not on the same page	More complicated than you thought—not the kind of relationship you want Cheated on, lied to, used Controlled, abused STD/Pregnancy Raising a child alone Sidelined/disconnected dad

Low Risk Deciding Approach

Attraction	Learn More About Each Other...	Then, Decide...	Discuss and Step	
Enjoy it! Have fun doing things together	Values in sync? Common interests? Find each other interesting? Do you have fun?	Do you want a relationship? To be exclusive?	Discuss sexual values and agree on the boundaries	
Remember the “love chemicals” surge 3-6-9 months	Enjoy each other’s personality? Talk easily? Fight fairly?	Are you on the same page?	Discus expectations for relationship	
Set boundaries on physical intimacy	Do your differences work together? Have you met each other’s friends, family?	How do you want to PACE the relationship? Where do you draw your line on physical intimacy?	Agree to a: *Plan for pacing & boundaries—rules on touch & time to keep to your intentions *Concrete plan for STI /pregnancy prevention	
	Detect any problem behaviors? Is person mature? Treat you well?		Discuss commitment levels honestly Discuss each other’s plans for the future (e.g. education, career, etc.)	



DATING VIOLENCE



Stay Together or Break Up?

- I. Your partner lies to you repeatedly. She or he treats you nicely in private, but ignores you or does inconsiderate things to you in public.



Stay Together or Break Up?

2. Your boyfriend or girlfriend is nice, but truthfully you've really started to like someone else.



Stay Together or Break Up?

3. You decided to date him or her basically because you wanted to have a boyfriend or girlfriend. But it doesn't feel right. It feels awkward and you wish you were free to be yourself again.



Stay Together or Break Up?

4. Your feelings have changed. You just don't feel the same about him or her. Besides, you two hardly have anything in common.



Stay Together or Break Up?

5. You find yourself fighting more and more and are unable to really talk things out.



Stay Together or Break Up?

6. Your partner's feelings are much, much stronger than yours. He or she is pushing for a level of commitment and expectation for the relationship that you're not ready for. You like him or her, but not the same way he or she is into you.



Stay Together or Break Up?

7. You feel smothered by the relationship and are unable to do the things you want.



Stay Together or Break Up?

8. You don't feel you can really be yourself. You feel pressured to be someone you're not.



Stay Together or Break Up?

9. You want your partner to stop using drugs, but he or she refuses.



“Really Bad” Ways to Break Up

Get a friend to tell him or her

Wait for a fight and then blame him/her

Do it through a text

Don't say anything, but change your *Facebook* status

Just ignore him/her

Be seen with another person

Go out with his/her best friend

Say, *“We can still see each other, but let's just be friends”*



Break Up Tips

Talk to a trusted friend or adult.

Pick a time and place.

Make a clean break. Be honest.

Avoid cruelty. Say what you appreciate about him or her.



Surviving a Break Up

Face reality—it's over.

Don't blame yourself.

Stay away from the revenge game or the “chase-‘em-down-game.”

Get perspective.

Beware of rebounding.

Get busy. Get out and get going with life.

Remember, things get better with time.





Red Flags Competition

and “It Depends”



Dating Violence

Both guys and girls get into arguments.

Some don't know how to deal with conflict in safe and healthy ways.

Take it seriously – work to change.



Communication Skills Can Help

Time Out Skill to put on the brakes before it gets out of control

Speaker-Listener Technique to use when talking is difficult

WWA formula to raise issues & complaints

Recognize **Hidden Issues**

A two-part **Problem-Solving** strategy

Skills can help, but **never never** minimize “arguments that get physical.” They can be dangerous, even lethal. They hurt children and are not part of a healthy relationship.



Intimate Terrorism

It's about power & control

Mostly done by males

Communication skills are **not**
the answer. Police
intervention is needed



Getting Information & Advice



National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

1-866-331-9474

Visit website: LoveIsRespect.org/

Text “loveis” to 22522



Early Warning Signs in Dating

- Makes fun and insults what you say, do or believe
- Calls you names, criticizes you, and insults you in public or private
- Texts you constantly
- Ignores you or doesn't respond when you talk
- Always has to win an argument
- Is super jealous
- Tries to keep you from friends or activities you like
- Forces you to do things



Caution!

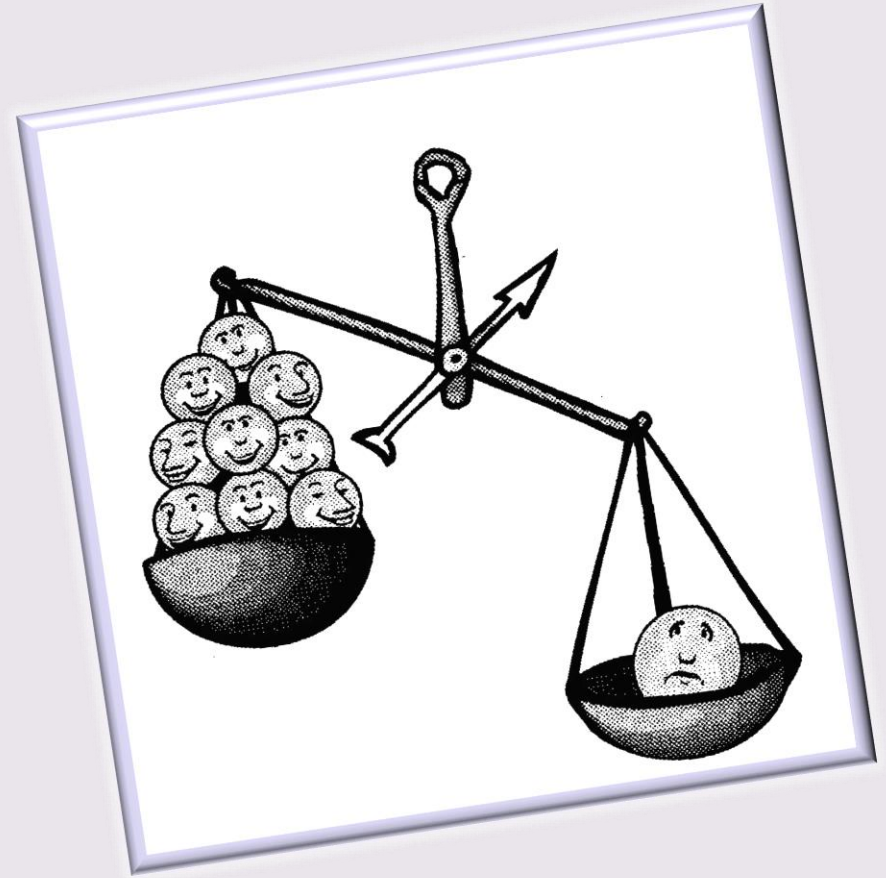
- A female is **never** more in danger of being **killed** than when leaving an abusive partner!
- Reach out for support from friends and family.
- A local domestic violence center can help a person make a **safety plan**.



Too Many Negative Interactions Hurt Relationships

Need 5 positives for every 1 negative!

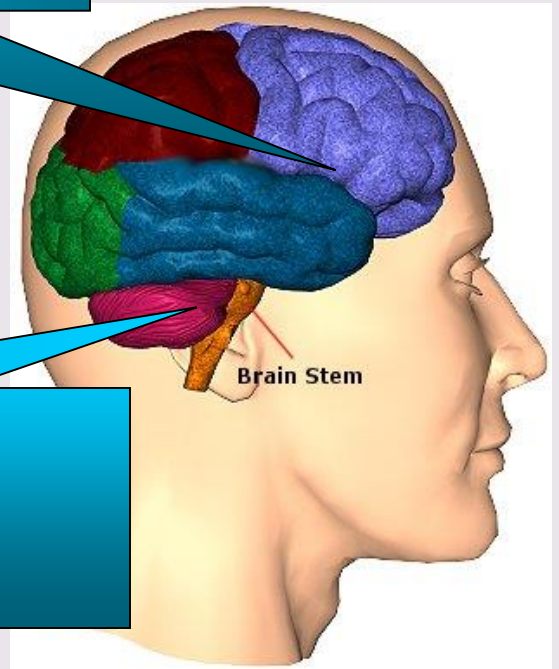
Learn to REDUCE, STOP, & EXIT out of these negative patterns!



Angry Brains Aren't Smart Brains

Cortex-Your Higher Thinking Brain
Where logic, reason, perception,
planning, and problem-solving take
place.

Lower Brain-Reactive, Automatic
Regulates bodily functions &
Reactions (fight or flight)



Time Outs – What to do

1. Say, “We/I need a Time Out” or some phrase to back away.
2. Do or say something to calm yourself down.
3. Identify hurt behind anger.
4. Remember VIEW.
5. Wait at least 30 minutes, but no more than 24 hours, to come back and talk.



Refusing—Be Clear, Be Strong

Don't be wishy-washy—Say NO.

Repeat it, again & again

Show you mean it-serious expression

Look person directly in the eyes

Tone of voice should match words; use assertive, not wimpy voice

Use body language that says NO

Sit up or stand up straight, get up

Say what you'd like to do instead (*let's go outside....*)

Push the person away

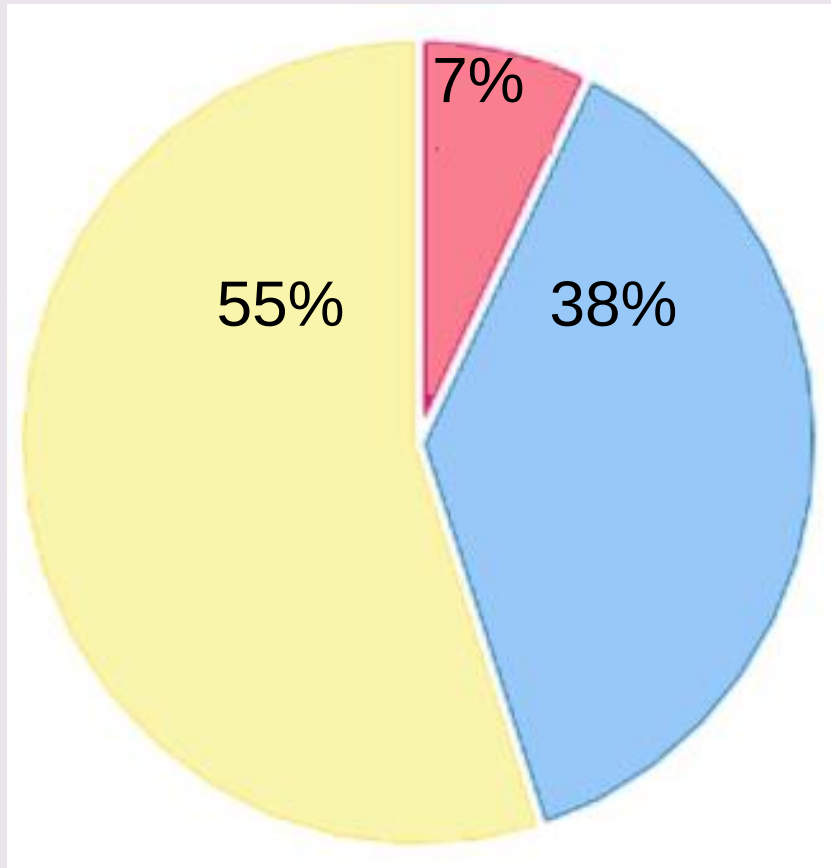
Leave

Fight back if needed

Say NO, stay on point



Communication



Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% Spoken Words
- 38% Voice, Tone
- 55% Body Language



Maintaining and Building Healthy Relationships

Know Yourself

Be assertive

Think before you post

Q & A



Thank you for
helping to better the lives
of our children!





Preparing. Protecting. Empowering.™

Amanda Siroosian, MPH
asiroosian@childbuilders.org