

Respectful Relationships

(Erin's Law Presentation- 2025)



Content Warning

This presentation will include information about child sexual abuse, personal body safety, and related topics as required by Erin's Law. While the content is age-appropriate and presented with care, it may be sensitive or triggering for some individuals. Please take care of yourself during the presentation and feel free to step out or reach out for support if needed.



Healthy Relationships	Unhealthy Relationships
You feel good about yourself/You are happy and have fun	Makes you feel bad about yourself, sad, angry, lonely, stressed, or upset.
Supports your goals and other relationships (family, friends).	Does not support your growth, or other relationships
Introduces each other to family and friends	Keeps you away from your friends/family, or 'hides' you from others.
Shows mutual respect, respects boundaries	Rude, hurtful, disrespectful, does not respect boundaries.
Good communication (can resolve conflicts together, tell one another things without fear of being judged, etc.)	Struggles to resolve conflict, doesn't communicate, or doesn't listen to one another.
You allow one another to feel their emotions and express them appropriately	Belittles your feelings, you feel afraid to show your feelings, or gets angry at one another for how the other is feeling, is unable to express emotions appropriately.
Trusting	Dishonest
Shared power dynamics, is not controlling	One person has all the power/makes all decisions/controls the other/is jealous.

How Do We Build Healthy Relationships

- Relationships are healthy when we feel safe and comfortable
- To build healthy relationships or correct unhealthy behavior:
 - Set boundaries
 - Practice healthy communication
 - Make sure there is consent and respect



Peer to Peer Assault

Any kind of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse that happens between classmates, friends, same aged peers.

This behavior could be intimate (relationship violence) or non-intimate.

Some examples are bullying, cyberbullying, pressuring, threatening, or blackmailing someone into doing something they aren't comfortable with, not asking for consent, or ignoring boundaries.



What is Grooming?



The process by which an unsafe adult builds up trust with a young person and their community so that they are able to abuse them in a way that is never recognized as abuse.

The unsafe adult tries to make everyone comfortable so that nobody thinks their behavior with the young person is inappropriate.

Sexual Harassment

Definition: Unwanted sexual advances, comments, or behaviors that create a hostile or uncomfortable environment.

- **Context:** Often happens in **schools**, online or public spaces.
- **Power dynamics:** Often involves someone misusing power or authority, but not always.
- **Usually verbal, visual, or non-contact behavior.**



Sexual Abuse

Definition: Involves **non-consensual sexual activity** — any sexual act done to someone without their clear and voluntary consent.

- **Context:** Can happen anywhere — in homes, relationships, institutions, etc.
- **More physical and/or violent in nature.**
- Often part of a pattern of **grooming**, manipulation, or control — especially in cases involving children or vulnerable adults.



The BEST kind of power = RESPONSIBLE DECISIONS

Is it healthy?

Is it safe?

Is it legal and follow the rules?

Does it show respect for myself and others?

Does it show that I have good character?



DIGITAL ABUSE

Sexual Abuse happens online too.



- Being pressured into sexting or sending nudes
- Being photographed without knowledge or consent.
- Receiving a sext or nude unexpectedly or when not desired.

What about Sexting??

Sexting is the sending, receiving or Forwarding of any sexually suggestive messages, images or videos via phone, computers, social media or other device.



Is it illegal??

When Sexting becomes ABUSE

Yes, it is illegal for those under 17 to send or receive a sext, and for adults to receive sexts from minors.

The law is strict and tries to protect minors from **sexual abuse** and **sextortion**

Sextortion is **BLACKMAIL** or **MANIPULATION** and it's abusive!



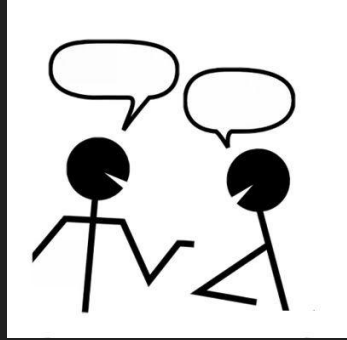
Who are the safe adults in your life?

- School Staff
- #TeamFeelings
- Home/Family
- Neighbors
- Relatives you do not live with
- Community Members



How to tell a Safe Adult

- Find a safe adult
- Tell them you have something very important to tell them
- You need them to listen closely.
- Wait until they are paying attention, and then you can tell them what has happened.



Sometimes adults may not know you are trying to tell them something serious, so it is important that you tell them this is serious and about being safe so they know to listen closely.

Be Persistent!

Sometimes after we've told a safe adult, we might need to tell another safe adult. This might be hard to have to talk about, but it is important we tell the people who need to know, so they can help keep us safe.

Bystander Skills, Helping a Friend

- A **bystander** is someone who sees or knows about a situation but doesn't get involved.
- Sometimes, people don't help because they think someone else will — but **your voice matters**.

What You Can Do As A Friend:

- ✓ Tell a **safe adult** if you see or hear something unsafe
- ✓ **Listen and believe** your friend
- ✓ **Help them talk to a trusted adult**
- ✓ **Keep it private** — don't share with other kids
- ✓ **Remind your friend it's not their fault**
- ✓ Even if you think someone else reported it — **say something anyway!**

WILL YOU BE A
BYSTANDER
OR AN
UPSTANDER?

Have a Plan

Now that you've learned about the steps to take when you or a friend are in an unsafe situation, someone is not respecting your boundaries, or you feel uncomfortable, make a plan.

Who will you tell?

When will you tell them?

If they don't take you seriously, or you don't feel heard- who will you tell next?

If you see the person who is hurting you, what will you do?



What is Erin's Law/Erin's Story

Erin's Law is named after childhood sexual assault survivor, author, speaker and activist Erin Merryn, who is the founder and President of Erin's Law.

Erin is a Schaumburg native, who was abused by an adult neighbor, and later by a cousin when she was a child. She was abused for years before telling anyone, and now is working to make sure people are educated on what to do if they find themselves in a similar situation and how to get help.

[VIDEO](#) (3.46)

