NEW MEXICO ALLIANCE FOR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE
Redefining Health for Kids and Teens

Talk, Trust and Teen Relationships

Real Conversations and Practical Tools for Guiding Teens Toward Safe, Respectful Connections

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Thank you for contributing to this presentation!



ARIELLA ROGAHN-PRESS
STUDENT INTERN

Disclosures

- Jen Robinson, MS, WHNP-BC, CNM, RN is a Nexplanon trainer for Organon
- Sheena Moe does not have disclosures



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Learning objectives

01	Review strategies to promote respectful, nonviolent dating relationships and decrease emotional, physical, and sexual dating violence among youth
02	Discuss how to support adolescents in unhealthy relationships
03	Share resources to support adolescents and their families in learning more about healthy relationships

Take good care of yourself <3

- Unhealthy relationships and abuse is SO common
- This topic impacts most of us personally
- Use our humanity as a guide
- Getting more comfy talking about relationships can help with authenticity, trust in clinical roles



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Our hot take

Relationships are the most important contributor to people's health and wellbeing

Relationships don't just mean romantic ones!

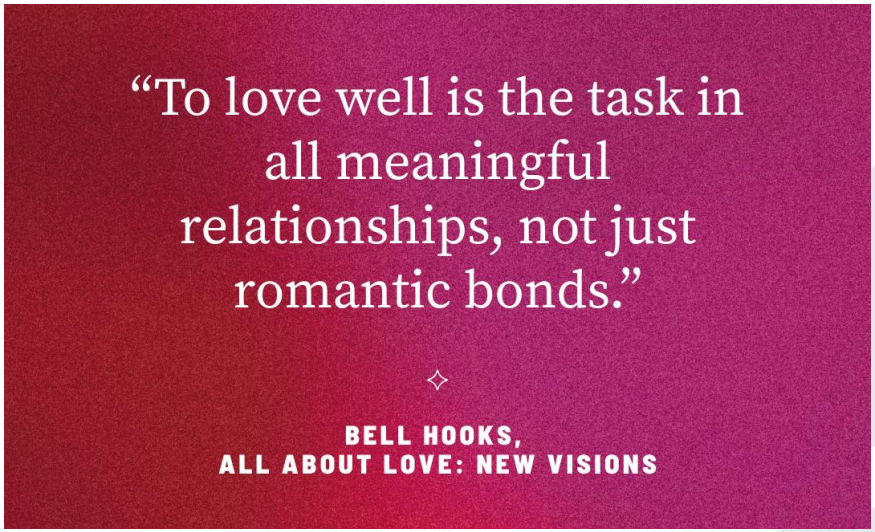

Image source: https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/relationships/g3721/quotes-about-love/
Quote by bell hooks

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Teens: Relationship Development

- Changes in relationship with self: Independence, identity and self-esteem
- Heightened need for peer belonging
- Teens shift to spend more time with peers and less time with family
- Supportive adults are still influential!

Relationship Development - Stanford Medicine Children's Health

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Self-reflection activity: How did we learn about relationships as young people?

Who modeled relationships for you growing up?

What would you have liked to hear/learn/see and/or experience about relationships?

Who was in my life at that time that was positioned to provide guidance on relationships to me?
(coach, auntie, grandma, neighbor +++)

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Social connection is a basic human need

- People are looking to technology to meet the deep human need for connection
- Connection = survival strategy





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Adolescent relationship abuse linked with:

- Suicidal ideation
- Sexual risk behaviors
- Substance use
- Depression
- Bullying
- Intimate partner violence in adulthood
- Homicide

Russel et al. 2021, Banyard & Cross, 2008

Adolescent relationship abuse: Coercive and controlling behaviors within the context of an adolescent romantic or dating relationship



- 69% of 12–18-year-olds who are dating have experienced physical, sexual, or psychological relationship abuse in their life
- (National Survey on Teen Relationships and Intimate Violence)

Khetarpal et al 2023

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NM high school student experiences

"During the past 12 months, did your boyfriend or girlfriend ever hit, slap, or physically hurt you on purpose?" About 1 in 10 NM youth (9.7%) in Bernalillo County reported yes to this question.

In this same survey, 9.9% of NM youth reported being forced to do sexual things that they did not want to do.

New Mexico Youth Risk & Resiliency Survey (NM-YRRS), 2023 Bernalillo County High School Report

Laying the foundation

Promoting respectful, nonviolent relationships in children of all ages



Early childhood education: teaching strategies

- Develop a shared vocabulary around concept of consent
  - Simple words like body, space, and touch
- Lay the social-emotional groundwork
- Teach kids that it's OK to express hurt
- Model consent



Source: gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/18/12/consent-every-age

Teaching consent to children of any age

Model respect for boundaries by asking children for consent and accepting their answer. Examples!

- asking for a hug, high five, or wave
- sharing information about them with others



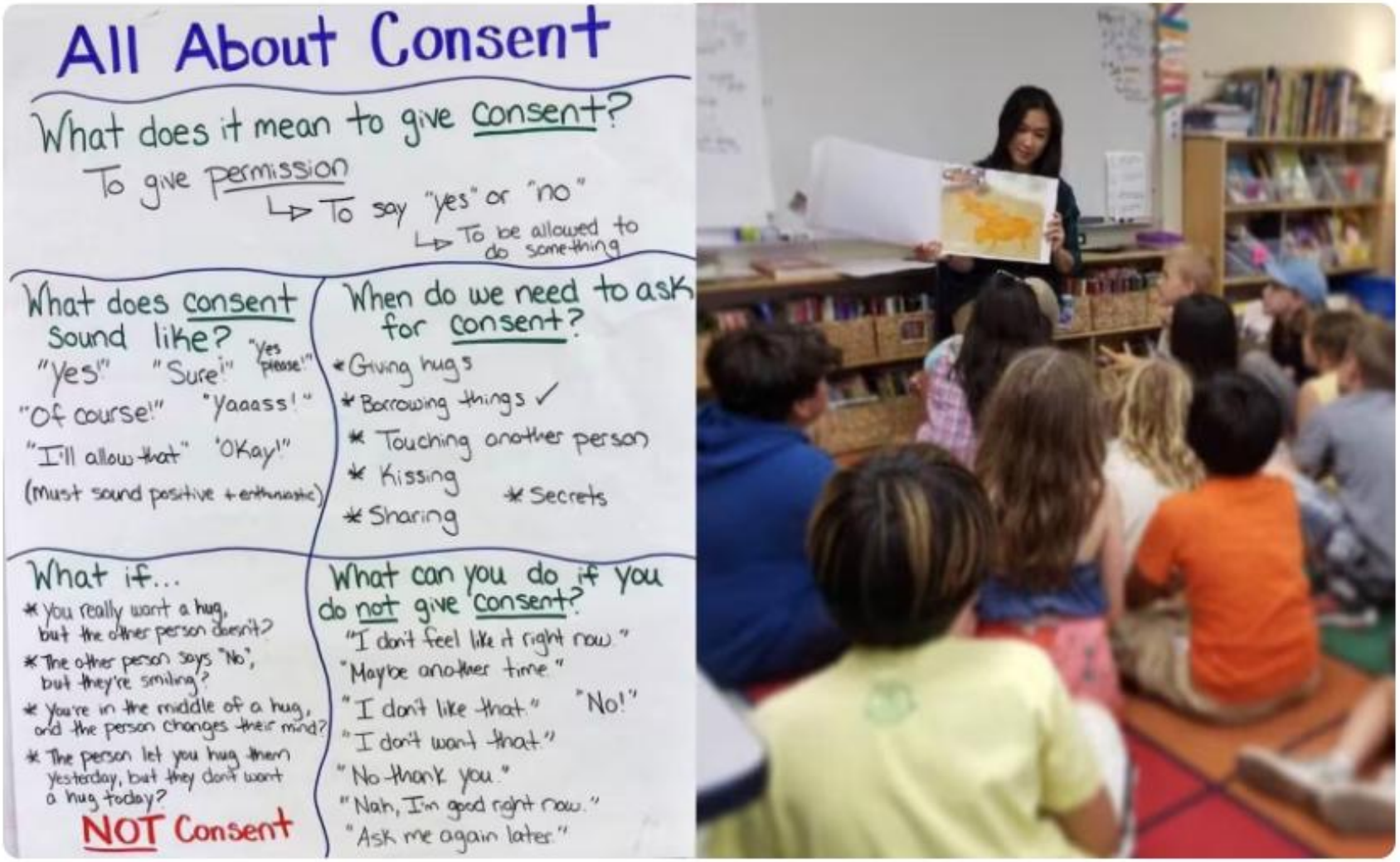
Elementary education: teaching strategies

- Break down what consent is
  - What it means to give consent
  - What consent sounds like
  - What to say when you don't want to give consent
- Repeat and discuss what students already know
  - Secret vs surprise
- Focus on tone of voice and body language



Source: gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/18/12/consent-every-age

Example of elementary consent lesson



Liz Kleinrock takes pride in teaching her elementary school students about equality and respect. *(Liz Kleinrock / Instagram)*

Middle + high school: Teaching strategies

Power Up, Speak Out!

Healthy Relationships in Action

Power Up, Speak Out! Is a five-lesson toolkit for educators that encourages middle school students to think critically about healthy relationships, power dynamics, boundaries, and consent. Our lessons teach students what to do, instead of what not to do.

GET THE TOOLKIT ☑

https://powerupspeakout.org/

youtube.com/watch?v=fGoWLWS4-kU

For the non-sweary version →



CUES Intervention

Confidentiality

Universal
Education &
Empowerment

Support



Source: SBHA "Addressing Adolescent Relationship Abuse in School Based Health Care" Presentation- Slide 48

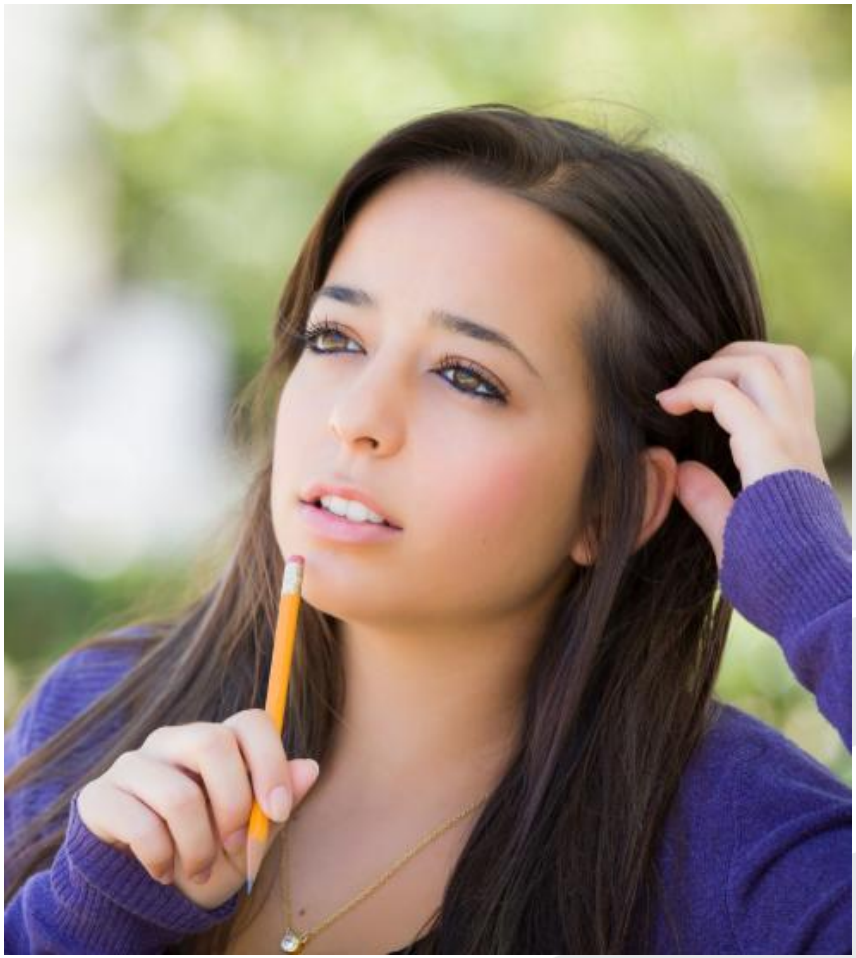
Luna, 14 years old



Presents to school nurse office for fatigue and nausea

Luna: Knowing the Signs

- “When did you start feeling more tired? What else changed around that time?”
- Reports she doesn’t really see her friends anymore because she’s so busy with her boyfriend
- Says her parents don’t like her boyfriend



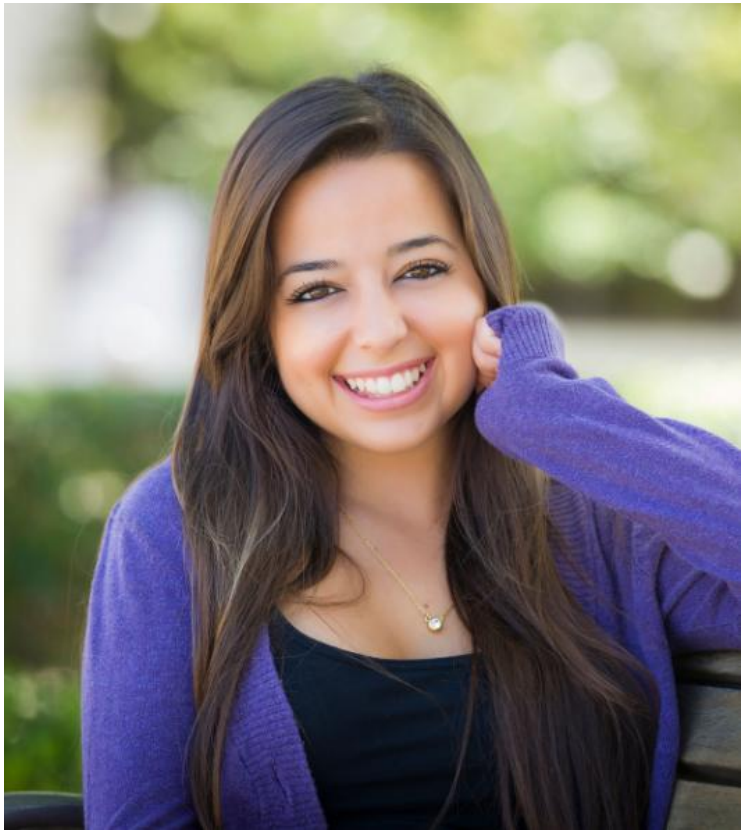
How else can unhealthy relationship dynamics present in the school setting?



- Missing school
- Behavioral changes
- Decreased grades

For Luna, decreased interest in art club and spending time with friends.

Luna: Establishing safety and trust



State out loud that goal is providing support, info, and assessing health concern

What's your confidentiality opener?

Source: SBHA "Addressing Adolescent Relationship Abuse in School Based Health Care" Presentation- Slide 49

The goal is not disclosure

The goal is to reduce isolation and harm.

Every encounter is a chance to
notice, validate, and connect.

Even if disclosure doesn't occur,
the interaction can still build a sense of worth and agency.

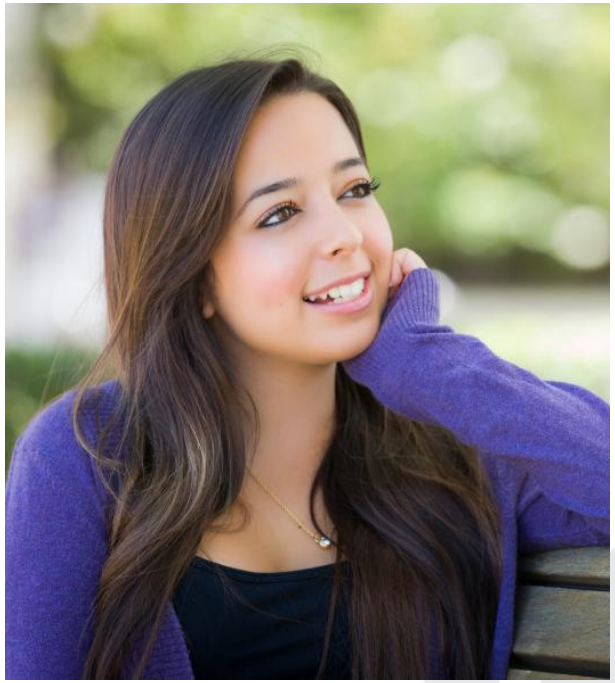
Sources:
SBHA "Addressing Adolescent Relationship Abuse in School Based Health Care" Presentation
SBHA "Preventing Exploitation and Substance Use in Adolescence" Presentation
SBHA "Promoting Healthy Relationships" Presentation

Luna says:

“My boyfriend wants me to spend all my time with him.

If I am with my friends or family, he’s texting me constantly and accusing me of not telling the truth about who I’m with and where I am.

I told my cousins that I’m worried he might be toxic, but they said this is normal.”



When disclosure happens:

"That sounds really hard"

"I'm sorry this is happening"

"I believe you"

"I am here for you"

Source: startbybelieving.org

If you identify abusive behaviors, name it
Label the behavior, not the person



“I’m not here to tell you if your boyfriend is a toxic person.
And these behaviors sound hurtful.”

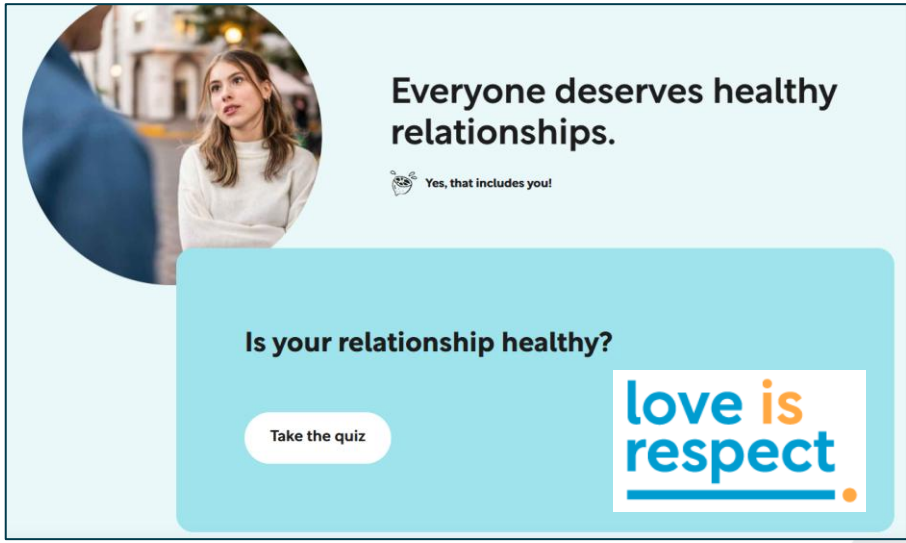
Ask permission to share info + resources → Supporting Luna to choose her own adventure

- “Because relationships are so important in high school, I offer to share about healthy and unhealthy relationship patterns with **all the students who come in here**.
- “Would you like me to share info other students have found helpful? I’m ok with just listening as well.”
- Be OK with a no



Image credit: Penguin Random House

Offering universal empowerment/education + support



"Have you ever taken those online quizzes, like personality quizzes? Other students I've shared this relationship quiz with have found it super helpful."



Collab with behavioral health (BH)

-BH not always available

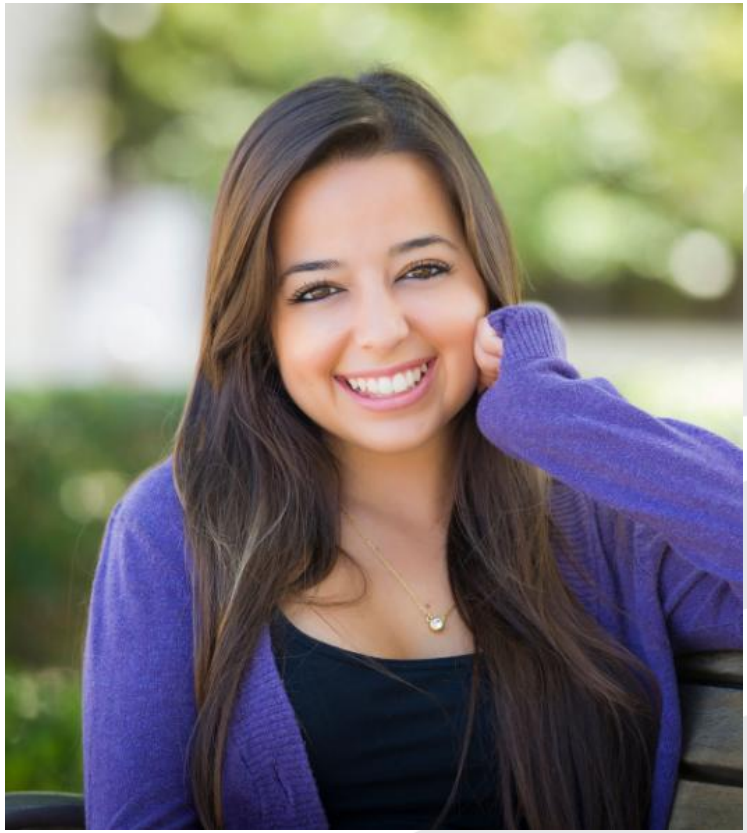
-Young person not always willing or wanting BH services

-Respecting their autonomy in engaging with BH services is a way to model consent



Keep the door open:
School health workers are well positioned to be trusted adults

- Address physical symptoms: crackers, fluids, rest
- Identify and validate: Going through a hard thing can cause real physical pain and discomfort
- “I’m here if you want to talk more or need support”



Get your flags ready for practice!

IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP HEALTHY?

All relationships exist on a spectrum from healthy to abusive, with unhealthy relationships in the middle.

Healthy relationships do not mean "perfect" ones, and no relationship is healthy 100% of the time. The info below relates to all of your relationships, not only romantic ones! While everyone makes mistakes sometimes, we can all learn to love better by recognizing unhealthy signs and shifting to healthier behaviors. If you are seeing unhealthy signs in your relationship(s), it's important to pay attention to them and recognize signs of abuse. If you think you are in a dangerous situation, trust your gut and get help from a trusted adult, such as your school nurse or school-based health center.



Healthy Relationships

- Open communication
- Respect
- Consent
- Honesty
- Boundaries
- Equality
- Making mutual decisions
- Fun/enjoyment
- Independence
- Trust
- Healthy conflict
- Safety/comfort



Unhealthy Relationships

- Not communicating
- Lack of privacy/boundaries
- Only spending time together
- Disrespectful treatment
- Lack of trust/suspicion
- Trying to take control
- Dishonesty
- Apologizing but not changing
- Jealousy
- Lovebombing
- Moving too fast



Abusive Relationships

- Mistreating partner
- Communicating in a harmful way
- Violence or threats
- Isolating partner
- Controlling what you do or who you are around
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's not true
- Forcing/pressuring you to do something you don't want to

TAKE THE QUIZ TO FIND OUT IF YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS HEALTHY:

FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY, REFER TO LOCAL LAWS AND RESOURCES FOR MORE HELP

- Joinonelove.org
- Loveisrespect.org
- Call: 1.866.331.9474
- Text: LOVEIS to 22522
- Myplan Teen app
- Call: 988

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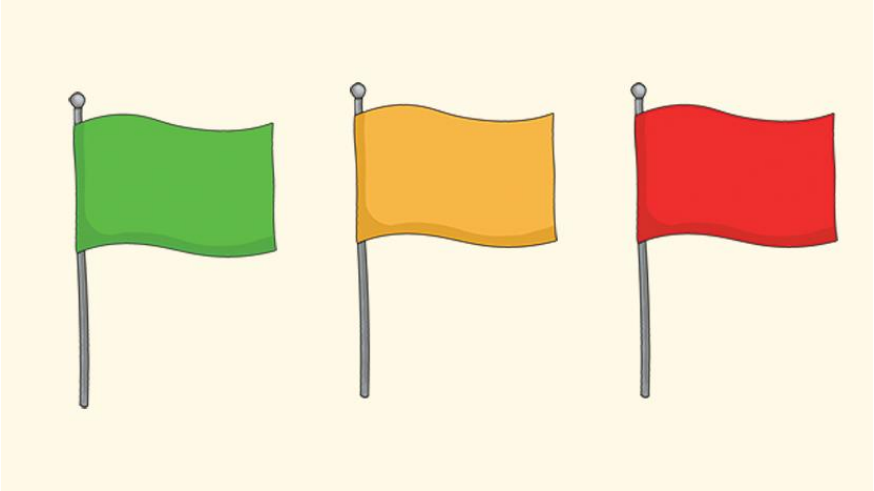
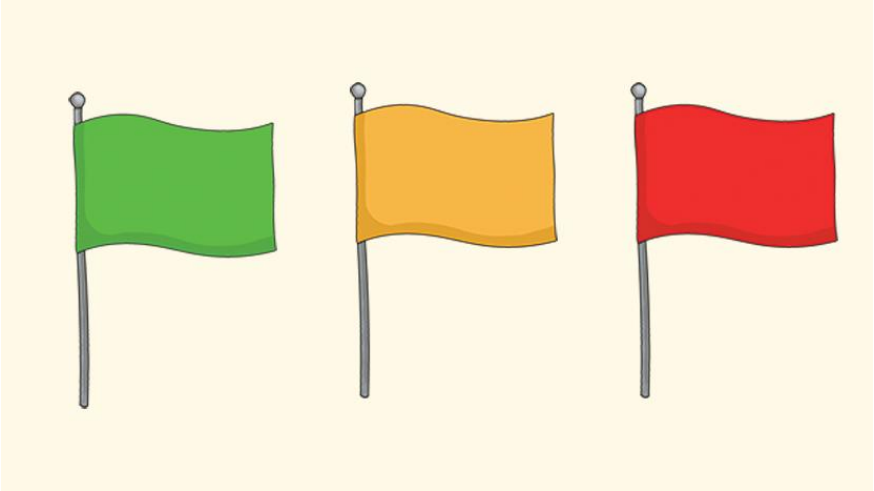
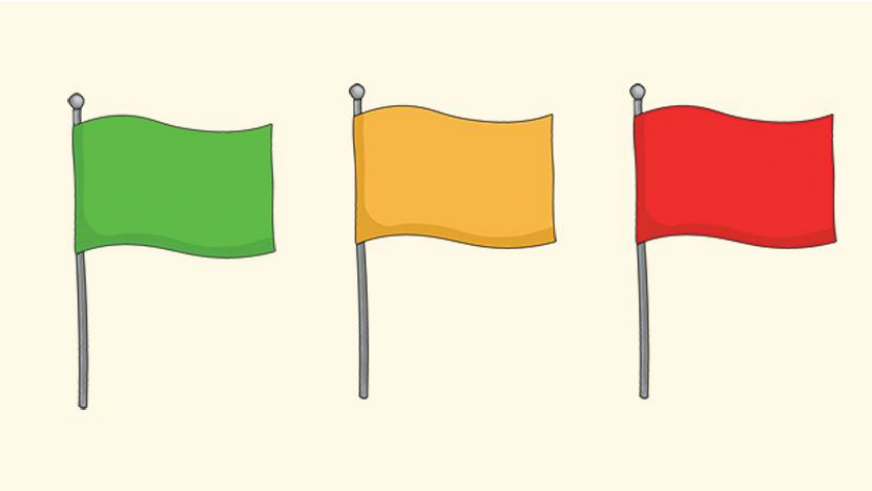
Is this a  **?**

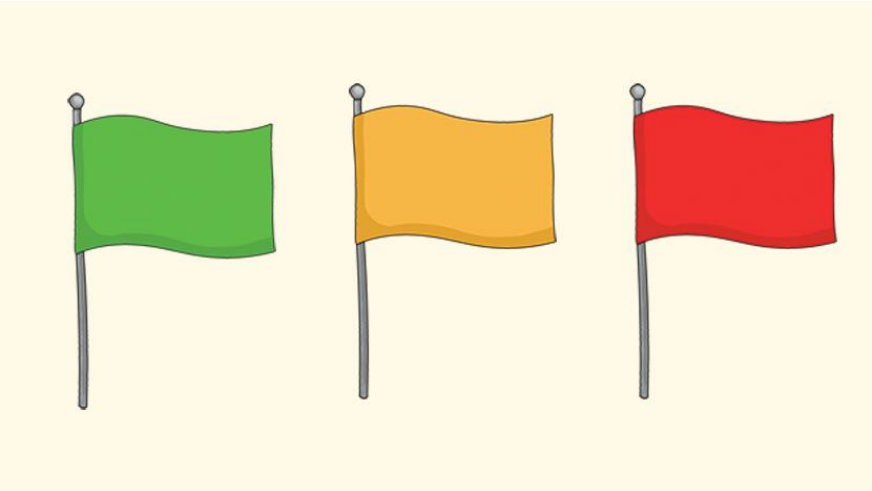
“My girlfriend tells me she loves me so much and she wants to be together forever.”

Is this a  **?**

"We share our locations with each other so we don't have to text each other to know where we are at"

Is this a  **?**

“My boyfriend did something that really hurt my feelings, and when I told him, he apologized and hasn’t done it again”.

Is this a  **?**

“The person I’m talking to gets jealous of my exes or other people. They asked me to stop talking to some of my friends because they don’t feel like my friends like them.”

What have you experienced?



Healthy relationship dynamics



Healthy Relationships Include:

- respect
- trust
- open communication
- consent
- boundaries
- independence
- safety

Green Flags

- supports friendships
- listens respectfully
- respects boundaries
- communicates honestly
- apologizes appropriately

Unhealthy relationship dynamics (not just in romantic relationships!)



Red Flags

- excessive jealousy
- name-calling and/or belittling
- controlling clothing and/or friendships
- threats
- pressure for sexual activity

Digital Relationship Patterns

- constant texting demands
- pressure to share passwords
- location tracking
- posting/sharing private images
- online humiliation

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Making resources visible– Universal Education



Flyers with QR codes + resources can be shared in/near:

- School nurse office
- Bathrooms (all genders)
- Hallways
- Bags with condoms and menstrual products

Make a bulletin board!! Partner with students!!

Image source: SBHA “Addressing Adolescent Relationship Abuse in School Based Health Care” Presentation

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Ways to partner with youth

- Focus groups in health classes
- Partner with Youth Advisory Groups
- Partner with clubs
- Do special activities around holidays
- “Office hours” for students to come and ask questions or talk

Sources: SBHA “Preventing Exploitation and Substance Use in Adolescence” Presentation – Slide 44
SBHA “Promoting Healthy Relationships” Presentation- Slide 68

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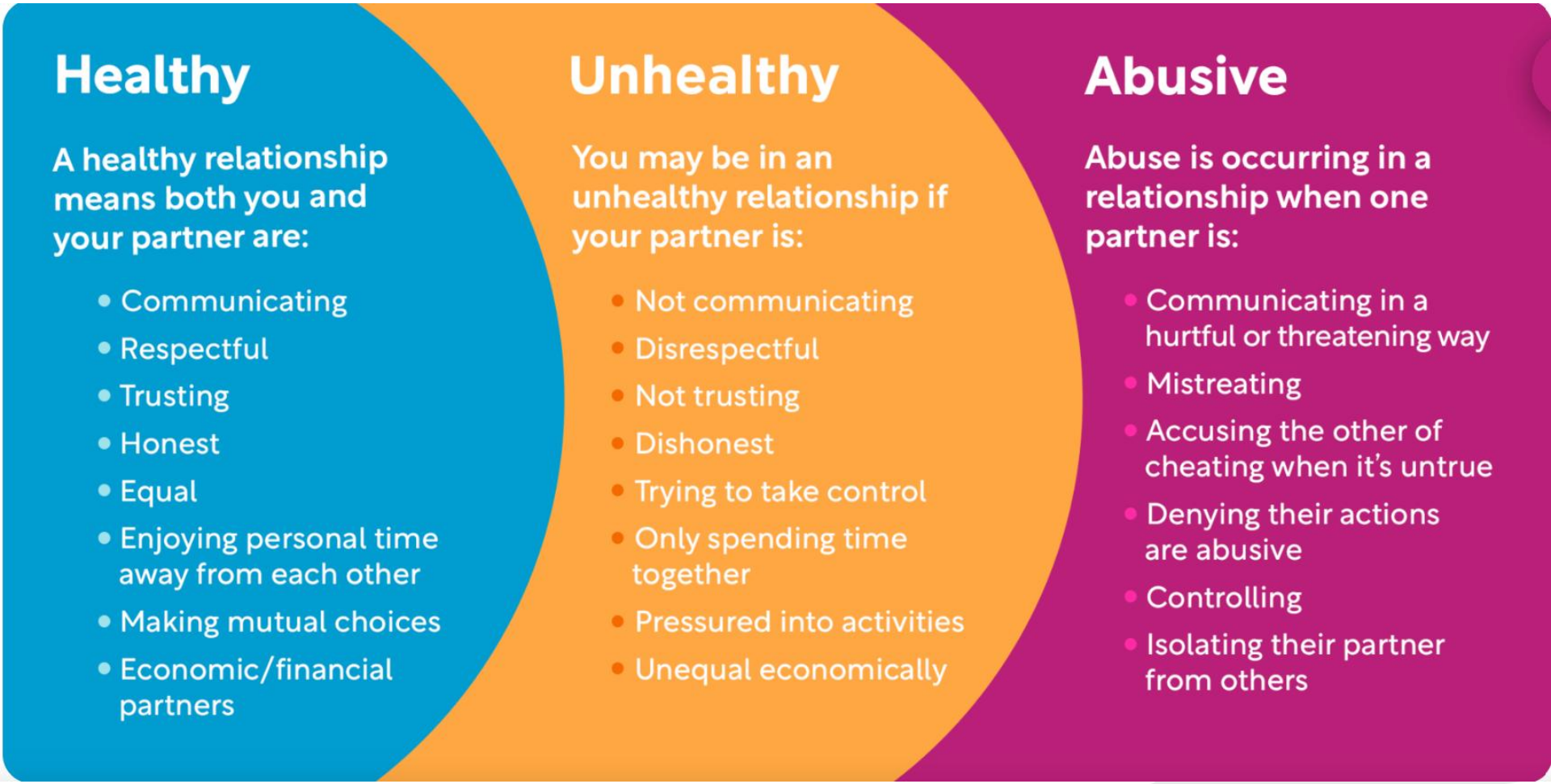
Provide **Universal Education** on the Relationship Spectrum



Relationship spectrum - love is respect

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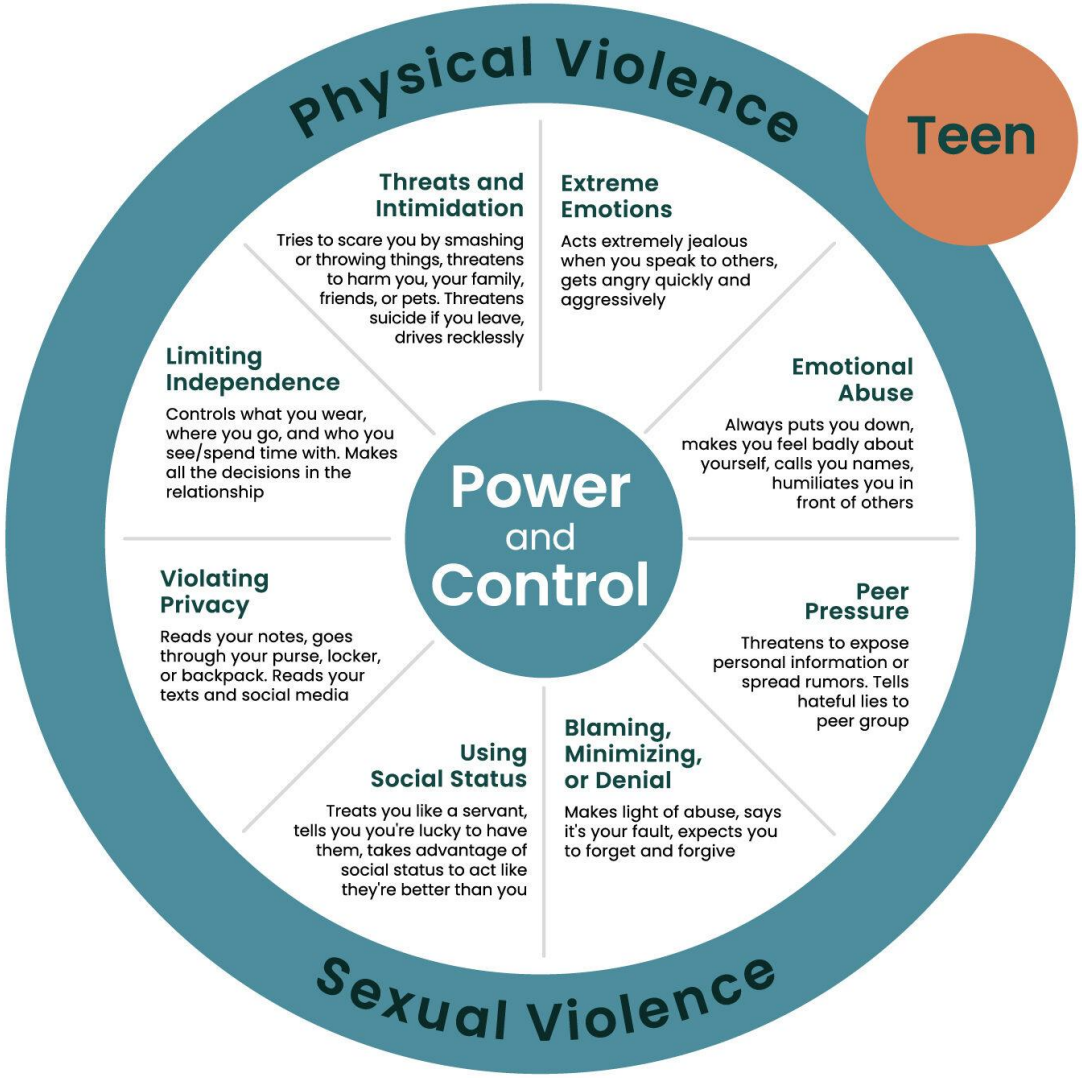
Provide Psychoeducation on Abusive Relationship Behaviors



Power and Control Wheel- Teen

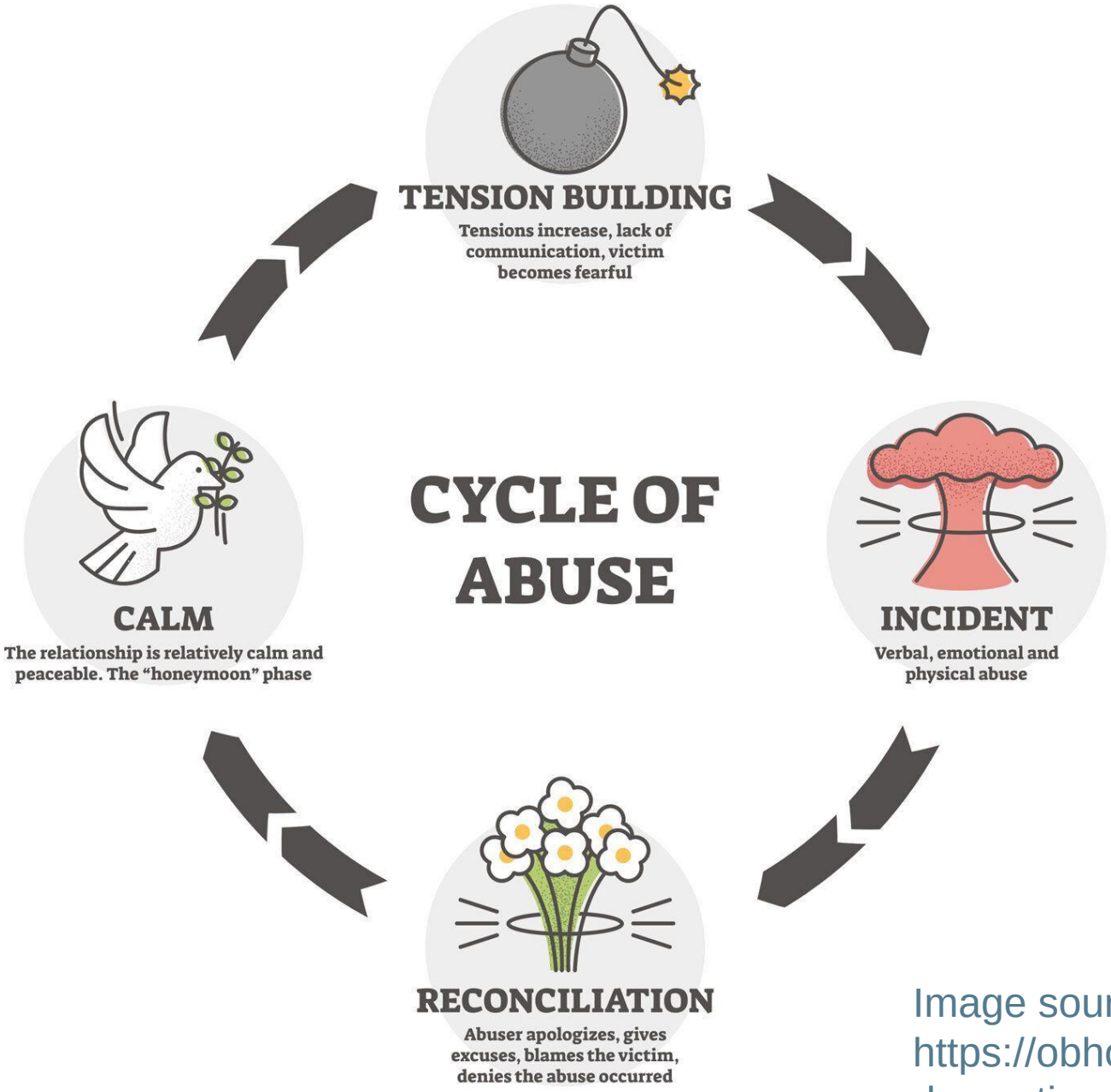


Image source: https://obhotline.org/awareness/domestic-violence/cycle-of-violence.html

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Relationship Resource Roundup

1. What do you like?
2. What do you not like?
3. How can you use this resource (in your work and/or life)?



TEEN RELATIONSHIPS

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RESOURCE ROUNDUP

Explore. Share. Connect.

LOVEISRESPECT.ORG
Information on boundaries, healthy relationships, unhealthy relationships, relationship quizzes, Safety Plan Guide, Chat Live and Text options

JOINONELOVE.ORG
Teen specific resources, Parent & Caregiver Guide, Educator Guide, Youth Leadership Program

AMAZE.ORG
Psychoeducation for different age groups, Resources for parents and educators

MYPLANAPP.ORG/TEEN
App for teens with interactive relationship quizzes, personalized safety strategies, + localized resources. Has safety information specifically for teens who may be in an abusive relationship

FUTURESWITHOUTVIOLENCE.ORG
Has a variety of free safety and education cards that can be placed around health center

HEALTH-PROMOTING RELATIONSHIPS PARADIGM
This paradigm describes a fundamental way of being in relationships that can cultivate protective beliefs in youth ages 11-18 to prevent mental and behavioral health risks and promote flourishing.

www.nmasbhc.org





How To Help A Friend Who May Be Abusing Their Partner



I DID A THING: Is My Friend in an Abusive Relationship?

joinonelove.org

Teen specific resources
Parent & Caregiver Guide
Educator Guide
Youth Leadership Program



Healthy vs Unhealthy Relationships

AMAZE Org
293K subscribers
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https://amaze.org/video/healthy-vs-unhealthy-relationships/ - Psychoeducation for different age groups, Resources for parents and educators



Find ways to support others.

exit

- Support a friend or roommate
- Support your partner
- Support a family member
- Support your child
- Support a student
- Warning signs of abuse

Healthy relationships for young adults | love is respect–

Information on boundaries, healthy relationships, unhealthy relationships, Safety Plan Guide, Chat Live and Text options

Empowering decisions for a safe path forward

Are you seeing red flags in a relationship with a current partner? Do you have a toxic ex? Do you have a friend, co-worker, or family member whose relationship worries you? You are not alone.



myPlan Teen - App for teens with interactive relationship quizzes, personalized safety strategies, + localized resources

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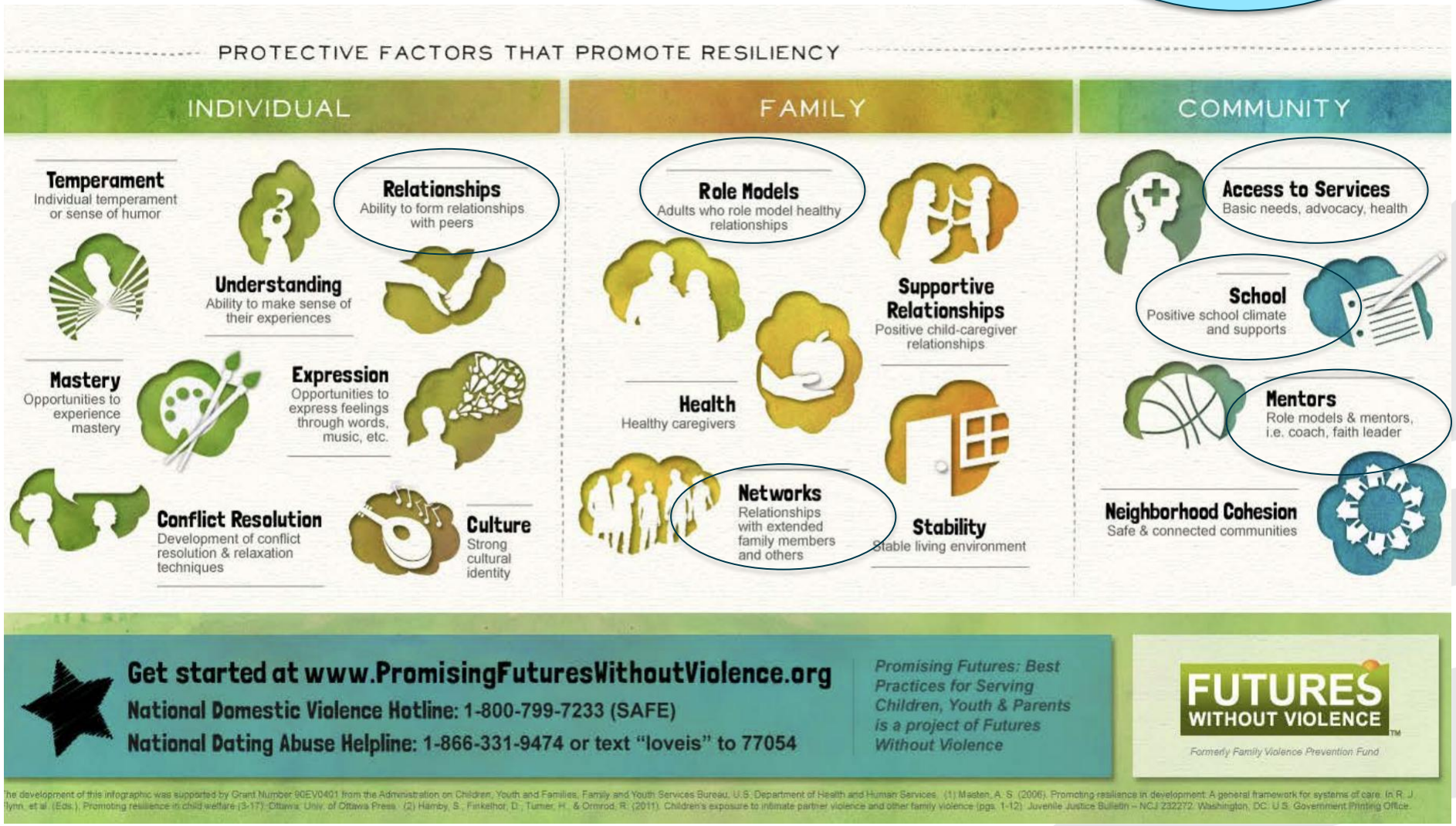
Protective Factors Among Adolescents

You are a protective factor!!!



Source: SBHA "Preventing Exploitation and Substance Use in Adolescence" Presentation – Slide 34

Engage trusted adults and families

Parental communication around sexual + reproductive health and relationship abuse is linked with:

- delayed onset of sexual activity
- increased condom use
- decreased rates of adolescent relationship abuse victimization and perpetration



East et al, 2015; Khetarpal et al. 2022; Dittus et al. 2015; Markham et al. 2010

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Focus of prevention in 4 areas: Suicide, Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Illness,

Newly Released



Core Beliefs

1. I am seen and loved.
2. I matter.
3. I can influence my life and health.
4. I can overcome hard things.
5. I have support.

Facilitators of Connection

Authenticity, Care, Empathy, Full Presence, Honesty, Humility, Kindness, Love, Nonjudgment, Nurturance, Patience, Respect, Self-Acceptance, Self-Alignment, Self-Awareness, Vulnerability

Protective and Flourishing Factors

Agency, Belonging, Competence (Cognitive, Behavioral, Emotional, Moral, Social), Connectedness, Hope, Meaning, Purpose, Resilience, Self-Efficacy, Self-Worth, Spirituality

https://www.hidta.org/adapt/prevention-intervention-resource-center/

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We are here for you!



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